

Riding Upon the Sheep's Back: A Business and Social History
Of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited
1878 – 1978

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ABSTRACT

This thesis considers various aspects of both the business and social history of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited. The history of the company along with its original mill in Kaiapoi, not only offers insight into one of New Zealand's most respected and successful woollen manufacturers, but also reveals its importance to the local, regional and national community. The main body is divided into two relevant sections: business and social. Section I presents an examination of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company's business practise while elements of enterprise history allow the company's management structure to be represented. The context in which woollen manufacturing was placed in New Zealand and how the company was situated within manufacturing associations is also studied. Section II raises issues not examined within many business histories. Aspects of social history allow for the analysis of the company's gendered labour and recruitment policies. Indeed, within many manufacturing histories representations of the female workforce and the conditions in which they worked has been given little attention. Nonetheless, the discipline of family history has allowed the opportunity to examine the effects of company paternalism on mill town families. The practise of benevolent control was followed vigorously by company management in order to maintain a secure labour force. Paternalistic policies such as pension schemes, welfare funds and mill hostels, reinforced worker allegiance to the company. The fact that many families remained working at the Kaiapoi mill for generations suggests that these paternal policies were successful. Indeed, oral interviews indicate that employee loyalty is still strongly felt despite the company's demise in 1978.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ATL	Alexander Turnbull Library
AJHRs	Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives
ANZ	Archives New Zealand (Wellington)
CM	Canterbury Museum
CPL	Christchurch Public Library
HL	Hocken Library
KHM	Kaiapoi Historical Museum
KPGT	Kaiapoi Petone Group Textiles Limited
KWMCo	Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited
MB	Macmillan Brown Library
MD	<i>G.R.Macdonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies</i>
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association
YMCA	Young Men's Christian Association

Introduction

Introduction

This comprehensive history of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited in its social context grew out of an Honours History essay written in 1999.¹ While researching the essay it became obvious that there was a need for further study into the woollen industry, and in particular individual woollen manufacturers. Despite the obvious importance of sheep and wool in New Zealand's economy and exports, the historiography of this sector is surprisingly limited. While there appeared to be a plethora of business histories based on various companies throughout New Zealand, few were of woollen manufacturers and fewer still contained any social history necessary to bring forward marginal groups such as the working class and women. Business histories, often written by men on behalf of male dominated companies, generally had a specific focus looking at the business's successes and trials rather than taking into account the men and women who constituted the workforce. This thesis counters these one-sided views by concentrating on not only the business aspects of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited, but the social ones as well. It is partly business history, partly social history, and partly enterprise history.

Adopting multiple perspectives makes it possible to obtain a more comprehensive picture of the company's history. Many business histories concentrate on profits and losses and providing biographies of particular founding fathers, but ignore other vital aspects of the concern. While not ignoring the importance of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company's financial situation, business related themes such as labour relations, technological developments, advertising, and tax and tariff issues, are all included within this work. Under the umbrella of business history the first half of this thesis explores various elements, including aspects of enterprise history. According to McLean,

Enterprise business is a critical examination of an individual company or organisation, with particular reference to the contribution made by its

¹ History 436, Public and Applied History, is an honours course offered by the History Department at the University of Canterbury.

management. Still rare in New Zealand, enterprise histories have a high analytical content and make considerable use of quantitative analysis.²

As important as management is within a business or enterprise history, the representation of workers is just as vital, and the second half of this thesis focuses on social history.

The possibility for closer examination of this woollen manufacturer became clear when initial research began for my 1999 history essay. The essay concerned a relatively short period of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company's history from 1915 to 1942; however, minute books ranged as far back as 1883, and other primary sources provided even earlier details, offering the opportunity for an in-depth study. The minute books, while admittedly presenting a company perspective, exhibited what could, at times, be an exciting daily and weekly account of business issues that frequently had serious consequences for its employees. However, the minute books encompassed only the period 1883-1942, and since this thesis examines the period 1878-1978 it was necessary to study other sources in order to strengthen the business-related areas not covered by the minutes. With such fascinating evidence available concerning other woollen manufacturers, it is surprising that many of the business histories so far produced have examined few of the assorted archival records held in the many libraries, museums and archives throughout New Zealand.

While such sources provided excellent information for this thesis, oral history techniques offered a counterbalance to the often rather dry male-dominated view given by such sources as minute books. Oral history has allowed the theme of gender to be explored, which is vital given the importance of women within woollen manufacturing. Yet no previous history of the New Zealand woollen industry has made use of female employee interviews. In fact, most business histories have not employed oral interviews with workers in their accounts at all. Although the workers are hidden in most business histories, the people who worked in the woollen mills of New Zealand were not some vague impersonal

² G. McLean, *Local History: A short Guide to Researching, Writing and Publishing a Local History* (Wellington, Bridget Williams Books Limited and Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1992), p. 48.

variable. An opportunity to represent the company workers' views through oral history has served to indicate how vital the Kaiapoi woollen mill was to the people of the town. There was no one in Kaiapoi whose life was not in some way affected by the mill and company. The loyalty displayed by employees towards the mill and management was indicative of the strong sense of identification they had with the place. Such loyalty was surprising given the harsh conditions under which they worked. The noisy, dusty and dirty work environment resulted in long term health issues for many. In spite of this, the employees obviously took a great deal of pride in their work, the fame of the company and of its products, a level of pride which can still be observed to this day.

Literature Review

Local and regional business histories in New Zealand, especially those concerning the woollen industry, have, for the most part, been commissioned by companies. Unfortunately, while such works provide us with important information, they are limited by their particular focus. Their tendency to concentrate on the concern's ability to survive fierce competition, nationally and internationally, and financial downturns, through the strong leadership of the founding fathers and subsequent managers of the business, not only indicates how positive the works are, but also highlights the male domination of the business and the histories produced. This domination is reinforced by the fact that many of the histories' authors are men. The relative dearth of academic historical work on the woollen industry has not improved the situation. Gavin McLean's work on four woollen manufacturers based in Otago, while using oral interviews, leaves out any analysis of the working conditions for women within woollen mills.³ Only a few of the small number of theses produced concerning the industry in this country have tried to remedy this omission by including women's work experiences within their studies. In this thesis the work experiences of both women and men in North American mills have been analysed, in an attempt to place the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited in a broader international context.

³ G. McLean, *Spinning Yarns, A Centennial History of Alliance Textiles Limited and its Predecessors* (Dunedin, Alliance Textiles Limited, 1981).

Commissioned Histories

Business histories produced or commissioned by companies carry a risk of bias. Often instigated by centennials or other anniversaries, the works were generally 'good-news' pieces that emphasised management, profits and the founding fathers of the business. In 1975, on behalf of the Mosgiel Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited, P.J. Stewart produced *Patterns on the Plain*.⁴ The book is concerned with celebrating the company's centennial, and does not provide a great deal of analysis concerning general issues affecting the business, nor does it critique the company's labour relations policies. A centennial history of Arthur Ellis and Company Limited was written by G. Kelly in 1977; like Stewart's work, it highlights the trials of the company and its successes.⁵ Here again personalities are important; the family control of the business (among its more popular products were mattresses and sleeping bags) is lauded merely because the family retained their domination within the concern for a long period. It appears oral sources were virtually non-existent in both books. The same can be said of A.G. Flude's work on the Henderson mill.⁶ P. Wood's commemoration of the township of Kaiapoi was produced on behalf of the Waimakariri District Council. She naturally includes local industries such as the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company in her work because as a large employer the mill was vital to the district. Wood makes much of the company's international reputation, celebrating the fact that the mill put Kaiapoi on the world map.⁷ While this work was a useful source when producing a historiography of the company, the fact that it was commissioned to order by the local council indicates that some level of bias would naturally exist. McLean notes that such commissioned histories are frequently, although not always, uncritical in nature and light on analytical content.⁸

During the 1950s and 1960s some of the larger woollen manufacturers commissioned booklets and pamphlets to celebrate their achievements and promote the company's name; inevitably these works are selective and biased. G.W. Lane,

⁴ P.J. Stewart, *Patterns on the Plain: A Centennial History of Mosgiel Woollens Ltd* (Mosgiel, 1975).

⁵ G. Kelly, *Mill in the Valley: A Centennial History of Arthur Ellis and Company* (Dunedin, Arthur Ellis and Company Limited, 1977).

⁶ A.G. Flude, *Henderson's Mill: A History of Henderson 1849-1939* (Henderson, Henderson Borough Council, 1977).

⁷ P. Wood, *Kaiapoi: A Search for Identity* (Rangiora, Waimakariri District Council, 1993)

a former director and managing director of the Mosgiel Woollen Company, wrote a small booklet concentrating mainly on the technical processes of woollen manufacture.⁹ Personalities and the company's business structure were not discussed, resulting in a work that is informative, but very impersonal. *The Saga of a Woollen Mill*, produced by Ross and Glendinning Limited (owners of Dunedin's Roslyn woollen mill) in the early 1950s, gives a small history of the business and again delves into the technical process of the mill.¹⁰ This approach is very similar to that of the booklet produced by the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited in 1959.¹¹ Technologically dominated, these works suggest to the consumer that their product and production process are 'state of the art' and hence something to be proud of. In many New Zealand business histories the focus is on the company's pioneering efforts and ability to survive the harshest times. Much is said about management, but the lives and work experiences of employees are hidden.

Theses and other Academic Work

While unpublished theses have made a valuable contribution towards the examination of the woollen industry and those who worked within it, they have all adopted a specific focus rather than offering a comprehensive study of individual woollen manufacturers. John Bartlett's thesis on the Otago woollen mills did, nevertheless, provide an important starting point for this work.¹² His thorough research, especially on the working process and conditions, contributes information on an area of industry that has had little independent study. When examining the

⁸ G.McLean, 1992, p. 48.

⁹ G.W.Lane, *Mosgiel Presents the Woollen Industry* (Mosgiel, Mosgiel Woollen Factory Company Limited, 1968).

¹⁰ Ross and Glendinning Limited, *The Saga of a Woollen Mill* (Dunedin, Whitcombe and Tombs, 1952).

¹¹ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill, Newspaper, NDF/E, *The Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited: A Brief History* (Christchurch, Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited, 1959). It is important to note at this point that the title of this booklet is called into question. A photocopy of the booklet held at the Kaiapoi Historical Museum comes under the above title and date; however, this copy is missing the front page. A separate photocopy held at the Canterbury Public Library, with the front page intact, is titled *A Policy of Continuous Development Keeps Kaiapoi in the Forefront of Industry in N.Z.* *The Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited*. It would appear that the Library's copy has the correct title. Unfortunately, the booklet is not listed in the *New Zealand National Bibliography*.

¹² J.Bartlett, 'Woven Together: An industrial Workplace in the Otago Woollen Mills 1871-1930,' Phd Thesis, (Dunedin, University of Otago, 1987). See also, M.J.Newsome, 'Factors in the Development and Location of the Woollen Textile Industry in New Zealand,' MA Thesis, (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1967)

‘sweating’ issues of 1888-1890, theses by K. Clark and D.F. Couling have also proved significant, especially as the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited was accused of ‘sweating’ practices in Canterbury which resulted in the only major strike to occur in the company’s history.¹³ According to Looser, the disciplines of Geography and Sociology have been at the forefront of recent suburban research in Christchurch.¹⁴ To some extent this is also the case with the study of Kaiapoi. Given the fact that there has been little scholarly research on the township, one of the most useful works available is Winsome Ross’s geography essay on Kaiapoi. She concentrates her examination of the township on the period after the closure of the mills, providing vital details of unemployment rates. Ross comes to the conclusion that despite the mill’s importance to the area, Kaiapoi was able to survive the closure with surprisingly little detrimental effect on employment patterns.¹⁵ The information and statistics presented by geographers and sociologists are of great value to the local historian. From the local historian’s perspective, however, what is frequently lacking in these studies is the appreciation of individual personalities: that is, the people who were the actors within the physical environment and whose lives created the statistics.¹⁶

At the forefront of academic work concerning the woollen industry is Gavin McLean’s *Spinning Yarns* (1981).¹⁷ Originating from McLean’s MA thesis in 1979, it is one of the few business histories in the country devoted to the woollen industry. McLean’s book is a centennial history of Alliance Textiles Limited and its predecessors, Oamaru Worsted and Woollen Mills Limited, the Timaru Worsted and Woollen Company Limited and the Bruce Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited. While the work follows a broad chronological approach looking at the general lines of development for each company, much of what is written is in the same vein as those earlier centennial histories.¹⁸ This work is, however, less

¹³ K.Clark, ‘A History of the Canterbury Trades and Labour Council, 1889-1937,’ MA Thesis, (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1993), and D.F.Couling, ‘The Anti-Sweating Agitation in Dunedin, Christchurch and Auckland 1888-1890’, MA Thesis, (Dunedin, University of Otago, 1973).

¹⁴ F.Looser., p. 3.

¹⁵ W.Ross, ‘Textile Mill Closure and the Small Town: The Case of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill 1971 – 1980’, Unpublished Essay, (Wellington, Victoria University, 1980).

¹⁶ F.Looser., p. 3.

¹⁷ G.McLean, 1981.

¹⁸ Ibid. p. 13.

celebrational in content and certainly more analytical. Nonetheless, given the period in which the history was written, some surprising omissions occur. Despite the advances made by first-wave feminist writings, women are barely visible in this book, yet women constituted half the working population within a woollen mill. While photographs of the spinning department at the Oamaru mill, the finishing staff at the Timaru mill, and the packing, hosiery and darning departments at the Bruce mill all suggest that females were employed, there is little critical analysis of their working experiences. The difficulties and unfairness of the gendered labour divisions within the mills, unhealthy working conditions, unequal pay, and open prejudice many women were forced to face, are not dealt with by McLean. Nonetheless, McLean interviewed a number of people for *Spinning Yarns*. However, what positions those interviewed held, and whether or not they were male or female, is not always clear.

Virtually all the previous business histories, especially those commissioned by companies, have ignored female work participation, including the booklet by the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited. These histories are also very European, ignoring the labour contribution of Maori and those of different ethnic and racial backgrounds. Most of the histories have also neglected oral sources, which are vital if worker experiences are to be represented. Those who have used them tend to rely on male voices, leaving the female employees' work experiences concealed. However, one Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited commissioned booklet, written by L.S.Fanning in 1920, has proved a most useful source. *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service* was essentially a propaganda piece designed to increase female employee numbers in the Kaiapoi mill.¹⁹ Not strictly a history, it is still an important source that serves to indicate how essential female employees were to the woollen manufacturing industry.

Local Histories

D.N Hawkins' local histories *Rangiora* and *Beyond the Waimakariri* have included those industries which are considered vital in a community as they employed much of an area's working population. Indeed, Hawkins gives us some useful

¹⁹ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill: Document, NDF/E, L.S.Fanning, *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service* (1920).

information concerning the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited. His works detail the personalities of the company mainly because these people were often wealthier white community leaders and were involved with other important businesses or organisations in the area. As a result, many of the founding investors and directors of the company are mentioned. This approach also serves to explain, partially at least, why his histories are so male dominated. His books are, admittedly, older works that quite obviously indicate he had not participated in the first wave of feminist history writing during the 1960s and 1970s. Hawkins' works are regional histories based on North Canterbury. While he provides some in-depth research on industries, he focuses on major employers, organisations, and male personalities; women and the 'working class' are kept in the background.

By contrast, Erik Olssen's *Building the New World* does consider gender and class. Olssen's study of the industrial/residential suburb of Caversham investigates the ways in which "locality, labour process, politics, culture and society shape each other."²⁰ Olssen includes a single chapter on women, examining the social construction of skill in relation to female workers, especially within the clothing trades. His main focus, though, is bringing the 'working class' to the fore by concentrating on the organisation of work and the labour process within particular industries, including textiles, though he does not look specifically at woollen manufacturing.

Examples of the North American and Australian Woollen and Textiles

Industry

Overseas exemplars of woollen manufacturing histories and geographies often help fill in the gaps presented by limited local and regional histories here in New Zealand. The feminist geographer Louise C. Johnson's more contemporary work (she concentrates especially on the 1980s period of restructuring within various areas of the Australian textile industry) gives attention to gendered divisions of labour within the woollen mills of the city of Geelong, Victoria.²¹ While this

²⁰ E. Olssen., *Building the New World: Work, Politics and Society in Caversham, 1880s-1920s* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1995), overleaf.

²¹ L.C. Johnson, 'New Patriarchal Economies in the Australian Textile Industry,' *Antipode*, Volume 22, Number 1, (1991), see also L.C. Johnson, 'Socialist Feminist Geography,' *Placebound*:

period is outside the dates examined in this thesis, much of what is discussed about the gendered workplace in the mills has relevance. Both Tamara Hareven, and Joy Parr, while providing a North American experience as a basis for comparison, also employ gender and 'working class' analysis in relation to the woollen textile mills and mill towns they used as their case studies. Like Hareven's work, Louise Tilly and Joan Wallach Scott have also proved useful when examining the family within the workplace. Hareven uses the Amoskeag Mills in Manchester, New Hampshire as her base of study.²² Providing not just a gender analysis of work within the mills, Hareven is "moving towards a gender history in terms of family, while still privileging the women subject."²³ One criticism levelled at her is that within her work the working class is united, as is the family. She does not pay attention to the dynamics within both groups. Domestic violence within the family, for example, is ignored, as are tensions and differences within the working class. However, unlike many family historians, Hareven is not oblivious to ethnicity as she writes in great detail of the French Canadian migration and the effect industrialisation has on the extended family unit. Tilly and Scott ignore ethnicity and race altogether, but unlike Hareven, they do make the family more dynamic.²⁴ Looking at the family as an economic unit of production in the context of industrialisation, they note the family adapted to changing working situations.

Parr, on the other hand, pays less attention to the family and concentrates instead on the 'gender of breadwinners.'²⁵ In her 1990 book, she examines Penmans Limited, a Canadian textile producer in the small township of Paris. Parr notes that

textile manufacturers seeking to establish a work force that was stable, female, and low waged often preferred to locate in small towns where there were few other firms, especially firms that paid men high enough wages to support their wives and daughters at home.²⁶

Australian Feminist Geographies, (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2000), and L.C.Johnson, 'Gendering Industrial Spaces: Recent Changes in the World and Australian Textile Industries,' Working Paper Number 24, (Melbourne, Department of Geography, Monash University, 1987).

²² T.Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982), and T. Hareven and R.Langenbach, *Amoskeag: Life and Work in an American Factory-City*, (New York, Pantheon Books, 1978).

²³ K.Pickles, *History 440*, 'What is the Relationship Between Women's History and Labour History,' *Constructing Feminist History*, 5 April 2001.

²⁴ L.A.Tilly and J.Wallach Scott, *Women, Work and Family* (New York, Holt, Rhinehart and Winston, 1978).

²⁵ J.Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1990).

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p.42.

By looking at her work we can see distinct similarities between the townships of Paris and Kaiapoi. Comparisons can also be made between Parr's work on paternalism within a patriarchal company and its effects on the township and employees, and the study of a paternalistic attitude within the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited. The inclusion of overseas examples concerning both the Australian and North American woollen and textile industries has offered models for the partial recovery of minority groups in the history of the Kaiapoi mill.

Any business history limiting itself to profits, losses and management is necessarily incomplete. While managers play an important role, so do the workers. Admittedly, to include all individual workers' views within a large company would prove a logistical impossibility in any historical work. Nevertheless, a range of employee opinions is presented, especially in the second half of this thesis. However, in the first half of this work, the emphasis is on enterprise history. Quantitative analysis (important for many enterprise histories) has not been possible to a great extent, given that Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company statistics were not plentiful or readily obtainable, but management's input into the business and the policies they followed have been examined. While enterprise histories are uncommon in this country, economic histories are not common either. W.B.Sutch, J.B.Condliffe, and C.Simkin produced excellent general economic histories during the 1950s and 1960s, with the inclusion of issues such as tariff debates, taxes, arbitration matters and the introduction of social security to New Zealand following the Depression.²⁷ Unfortunately, since then little has been done to extend the examination of general business or economic history in New Zealand. Despite the dearth of general business histories, Simon Ville's *A Select Bibliography of the Business History of New Zealand* (1993) has been particularly useful in writing a local business history.²⁸ Also useful has been Graham Tait's

²⁷ J.B.Condliffe, *New Zealand in the Making* (London, George Allen and Unwin, 1936, George Allen and Unwin, 1959), C.G.F.Simkin, *The Instability of a Dependent Economy* (London, Oxford University Press, 1951), and W.B.Sutch, *Colony or Nation* (Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1966) and *Recent Economic Changes in New Zealand* (Wellington, Institute of Pacific Relations New Zealand Council, 1936).

²⁸ S.Ville, *A Select Bibliography of the Business History of New Zealand* (Auckland, University of Auckland, 1993).

compilation of many of the small business histories produced by various companies in New Zealand.²⁹

Other major sources for the business study of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited included the unpublished *G.R. Macdonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies* in the Canterbury Museum and the *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* (1903). Both were used to find biographical information on the personalities of the company including various chairmen, shareholders, directors and managers. A very useful research tool for local business history was the Christchurch 2000 Database held at the University of Canterbury History Department.

Primary Sources

Primary sources contain a certain level of bias and subjectivity that cannot be avoided.³⁰ The major primary source used for this thesis was the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited Minute Books dating between 1883-1942. Minute books, executive minutes, and salary books often hold a mine of information vital to any local business historian. However, company minute books, by their very nature, are predisposed towards the business owners, management, directors, shareholders, and even office workers, who were, more often than not, male. Minute books, especially during the earlier period of this study, were naturally the work of the wealthier and more articulate, “people with strong views and a sense of place in their history.”³¹ This bias accounts for the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company minutes often leaving out important details that could place the concern in a less than flattering light. Indeed, important particulars concerning the strike of 1889 over ‘sweating’ practices within the company were not placed in the minutes of that period. Based on directorship and management concerns, minute books rarely provide the historian with the workers’ point of view. Instead, they give an overall picture of the way a company was being managed, and how well a business was doing financially. Because labour relations are often discussed from a management versus union perspective, exciting

²⁹ G.A.Tait, *Manufacturing in New Zealand* (Auckland, Cranwell Publishing Company, 1959).

³⁰ G.McLean, 1992, p. 8.

³¹ Ibid.

and often very relevant information is available in the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company's minute books. Nonetheless, all information utilized from a source such as this must be taken with 'a grain of salt.' What if points made within the books were incorrect, what of people who were often telling the bosses what they wanted to hear rather than giving accurate information, what of the dynamics within and between directors and chairmen or general managers and directors? All must be taken into account when drawing on such sources. Another problem faced when using the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company minute books was the forced constraint of the period studied. This thesis covers the period from 1878, the company's initial beginnings, until 1978, when the Kaiapoi mill was officially closed. Unfortunately, all the company's pre-1883 and post-1942 minutes are missing. After an exhaustive search throughout the country, involving numerous toll calls to various museums, archives, and libraries, it must be concluded that the minute books have either been destroyed or are hiding under someone's bed. As a result the primary sources used for the period after 1942 were generally oral sources, annual reports, government reports of enquiry, and newspapers.

Newspapers, an excellent primary source, can nonetheless often be, like company reports and minutes, subjective: "Newspapers, biased towards reporting the new, the sensational and the unusual, are imperfect mirrors of their communities even when they do not adopt the sort of highly partisan stances that nineteenth-century newspaper editors delighted in."³² This thesis made use of a variety of newspapers from the Canterbury region. Most regularly utilized were *The Press* and the *Lyttelton Times*, both of which, especially pre-1900, carried a certain level of partiality towards their favoured political systems. The left-wing *Lyttelton Times* frequently provided an opportunity for employees and unions to voice their collective concerns over industrial abuses, while the right-wing *Press* provided partisan support for local business. Despite their bias, however, much information can be gleaned from these sources concerning the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited because reports of its annual general meetings were printed in

³² G.McLean., 1992, p. 8.

both newspapers, as were most issues or newsworthy events affecting the company.

Oral interviews with company workers are another vital primary source since they provide access to the hidden histories of people on the margins: “workers, women, indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities and members of other oppressed or marginalized groups.”³³ According to A.Thomson, the use of memories as historical evidence has been subjected to severe criticism:

At the core of criticisms of oral history in the early 1970s was the assertion that memory was distorted by physical deterioration and nostalgia in old age, by the personal bias of both interviewer and interviewee, and by the influence of collective and retrospective versions of the past.³⁴

However, in order to assess the reliability of oral memory a number of guidelines can be followed. Adopting methods of representative sampling such as equal numbers of men and women or equivalent numbers of workers and management is one technique. Another is to use documentary sources in order to check the reliability and internal consistency of the oral sources.³⁵ Hareven’s case study of the Amoskeag Mills in New Hampshire is noted for its comprehensive study of workers’ views through oral interviews.³⁶ Interviewing many of both sexes helped maintain the constancy and steadfastness of facts. However, gender differences in oral history must be taken into account when discussing the contributions many of the interviewees made to this work. S.Leydesdorff, L.Passerini, and P.Thompson state that there are differences between the ways in which men and women remember.³⁷ This difference could be noted in many of the interviews given by the former workers of the company. The widespread “tendency for men to dominate in the public sphere and for women’s lives to focus on family and household” is possibly reflected in how many men were willing to talk on tape and how many

³³ A.Thomson, ‘Making the Most of Memories: The Empirical and Subjective Value of Oral History’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Series 6, Volume 9, 1999, p. 291.

³⁶ Ibid. p. 291.

³⁵ Ibid., p. 292.

³⁶ T.Hareven and R.Langenbach, *Amoskeag: Life and Work in an American Factory-City* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1978).

³⁷ S. Leydesdorff, L.Passerini, and P. Thompson (eds), *Gender and Memory* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 1. See also S.Leydesdorff, ‘Gender and the Categories of Experienced History’, in L.Davidoff, K.McClelland and E.Varikas (eds), *Gender and History: Retrospect and Prospect* (Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 2000).

women were not.³⁸ Indeed, while all of the men interviewed agreed to speak on tape, many of the women interviewed preferred the informality of note-taking. A level of loyalty towards the company still existed for many of these workers, long after the mill had closed down, especially so for the female employees, who were often very reluctant to say anything that might place the company in a bad light. Indeed, many spoke proudly of the company's international reputation as though that reputation would suffer if critical comments were made about the business. Women and men also spoke often of the female role as workers within the Kaiapoi mill, and the view that working there was merely a stepping-stone between school, marriage and family. However, evidence would suggest that many of the women at the mill either remained working once they got married or returned once their children were at school. If work for women in the Kaiapoi mill was recalled as a temporary measure before marriage then the memory could be considered an 'unreliable' one. This perspective could also be deemed a resource, since "mistaken memory [can act as] a vital clue to understanding the meanings of ... events for individuals and for the working-class community, as they happened and as they lived on in memory."³⁹

Besides gender, ethnicity is another major theme of current social history. While this thesis recognises the need to 'render visible' not just female but Maori work participation within the Kaiapoi mill, obtaining oral interviews with Maori mill workers has proved extremely difficult. Few of the interviewees could remember the names of any Maori employees, despite the fact that there were Maori who worked at the mill, and the people whose names that were obtained proved difficult to contact, mainly because some had moved on and others, it would appear, did not wish to be contacted.

Structure

This thesis follows a number of themes. The first two chapters focus on the company's origins, structure, management, reputation, and financial situation, with a detailed study of specific aspects of the business. A section on 'advertising and exhibitions' examines the company's methods of self-promotion in order to

³⁸ S.Leydesdorff, L.Passerini and P.Thompson, p. 1.

³⁹ A.Thomson in *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 1999, p. 292.

increase and improve its reputation both nationally and internationally. Looking at 'technical innovations and expansion' within the company and, indeed, the woollen industry in general, allows an opportunity to discuss an aspect of business that is vital yet ignored within many local histories. Under the heading 'labour processes and relations,' the thesis studies the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company's ability to maximise its labour resource potential and its relations with its labour force. The section on 'taxes and tariffs,' an ongoing issue for the woollen industry, examines how the company handled rising taxes and stagnant tariff rates. The third chapter aims to put the business in a national context by studying the woollen manufacturing associations to which the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited belonged and exploring the levels of competition or cooperation between other woollen companies.

Chapter four begins the social section of the thesis and allows an opportunity to bring to the fore female workers, who ^{Company Ltd} consisted of half the working population within the woollen industry yet, who were kept hidden in previous historical accounts of particular woollen manufacturers. Chapter four examines the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company's recruitment policies, and to a lesser extent paternalism and gendered labour practices, both at the Kaiapoi mill and Christchurch factories. Chapter five explores the links between company paternalism and mill town families. This chapter uses, to some extent, the discipline of family history, drawing on the work of Hareven and Parr on company paternalism. Unlike many business histories which indicate that a company's paternalistic attitude towards its workers should be celebrated without examining the workers' response to that form of benevolent control, this chapter critiques the company's paternal policies and examines their effects upon workers. The sixth chapter is an epilogue, analysing what has happened to the company and mill since 1942, and placing these events in a national context. Oral histories were vital for this section, not only to help fill in any gaps between 1942 – 1978, but to give an insight into just how important the Kaiapoi mill was to the workers. For many the mill was not simply a workplace; rather it was a much loved institution that generations of families had come to rely on.

Despite the wide range of history disciplines utilised in these chapters there are, unfortunately, some limitations with various sources that cannot be avoided. As stated, some problems exist within minute books. Various and often important issues are raised, but little detail is given and there is frequently no corroboration in the newspapers of the time. Statistical information is lacking in the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited minute books, which concentrate mostly on the Christchurch city factories; the Kaiapoi mill's statistics have probably been lost with the post-1942 minutes. The statistics we do have unfortunately do not provide us with any information concerning Maori employees: how many worked there and for how long, what positions they worked in, and whether those jobs were skilled or unskilled is unknown. Annual reports, which are vital in any business history if a financial record is to be produced, do not always tell us exactly what the profits or losses were for any given year. Indeed, post-1914 the annual reports gave increasingly little detail, often promoting the fact that much had been spent on the mechanisation of the company's factories and mills, but giving only an outline of the business's financial situation. Archival records concerning the woollen industry were often missing, despite being on accession lists. Records of the company's Limited status have also been lost. Oral sources have their own limitations. Many exciting and interesting matters were mentioned by various employees, but either could not be corroborated by any other sources or were, rather frustratingly, not to be discussed within the thesis. Despite these limitations, the sources that were available proved invaluable and their variety, especially the personal stories of all those interviewed, create a comprehensive picture of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited's history since 1878.

Chapter One: Origins, Organisation and Expansion***1878 – 1914*****Introduction: Main Themes**

The business history of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited (hereafter KWMMCo) from 1878 – 1914 reflects the company's concern with establishing itself locally, nationally and internationally through marketing and self-promotion. Led by the profit driven entrepreneurs Isaac Wilson and George Henry Blackwell, the KWMMCo was to embark upon a century long campaign that was to espouse capitalistic values with such vigour that its reputation quickly grew into an international success. Consolidation of the company's identity was initially achieved through active participation in national and international exhibitions. Eventually, however, nationwide advertising in newspapers became an integral part of the company's marketing scheme.

Another important theme of the company's business history is its constant demand for new technology. For the KWMMCo, technology was seen as a way to reduce labour costs and increase productivity. In certain sections of the company's mill and factories, technology allowed for the use of cheaper semi-skilled and unskilled workers. With more cost-effective production achieved by new technology, the expansion of premises and product-lines was possible. This expansion proved to be a visible way of showing the company's development since its inception which, in turn, further cemented its reputation as a success, and provided the profits continued, kept the shareholders satisfied.

Labour relations comprise another major theme of this history. By examining the KWMMCo's labour processes and structure of management we can gain some idea as to how the company tried to maximise the potential of the labour resources available

to them.¹ The manufacturing of quality woollens has always been an industry that required skilled workers. This is certainly true in sections of the weaving and spinning departments, where the company satisfied its continual need for skilled labour by following a policy of bringing in immigrants from the 'mother' country.² However, a gradual process of deskilling among the general working populace in the mill was also to take place, due to management's need to reorganise work in order to compete with a growing capitalist market. Management took control of the work and the labour-force with direct supervision and by subdividing that work into smaller, more easily learned tasks. The strict and aloof manner in which KWMC staff were treated was epitomised by the hierarchical management structure which was to remain very much the same throughout the company's history.

The Directors' desire to keep shareholders happy by providing a regular and high paying dividend came, especially during the late 1880s, at the expense of good labour relations with the company's employees. Accused of sweating practices, paying poor wages and forcing their employees to work in cramped and/or poor conditions, the second largest employer in Christchurch and one of the largest textile employers in the Dominion found itself at the centre of the anti-sweating struggle. A single reason for the sudden rise in the anti-sweating movement has not been

¹ J.E.Bartlett, 'Woven Together, An Industrial Workplace in the Otago Woollen Mills 1871-1930,' BA (Hons) Thesis, (Otago, University of Otago, 1987) p. 80.

² It was not just immigrants brought out from England; Chapter Two also notes that much of the company's technology came directly from 'Home.' Ronald Robinson points out that in Australia [and] New Zealand, ... although original cultural affiliation played its part, ... collaboration stemmed largely from economic dependence. For the greater part of the century these colonies had no alternative to Britain as a source of capital, export markets immigrants and protection. In the early stages of growth metropolitan investment largely pre-selected the colonial economy's immigrants and governed the direction and speed of its growth.... Collaborative bargains proved easy to make and to keep when commercial partnership was mutually profitable and colonists were permitted to manage their own internal affairs. Their bread was buttered in the Mother Country.

R.Robinson, 'Non-European Foundations of European Imperialism: Sketch for a Theory of Collaboration', in R.Owen and B.Sutcliffe (eds) *Studies in the Theory of Imperialism* (London, Longman Group Limited, 1972), p. 124. See also L. Trainor, *British Imperialism and Australian Nationalism* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1994), J.A.Hobson, *Imperialism a Study* (London, Unwin Hyman, 1902, 1905, 1938, 1988), E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire 1875-1914* (New York, Pantheon Books, 1987, Vintage Books, 1989), and P.J.Cain and A.G.Hopkins, *British Imperialism: Innovation and Expansion 1688-1914* (London, Longman Group Limited, 1993).

found, however, the fact that the country was going through its first depression, and that this depression was to last over a decade, suggests that this was the most probable single factor.³ Strained dealings between otherwise obedient workers and their employers also resulted in a sudden rise in unionism. Workers found they had to combine together to improve their lot. In 1889, the Tailors', Tailoresses' and Pressers' Union was formed in order to protect labouring members of the textile trade. To do this they set out a list of expectations employers were required to follow; however, to the KWMMCo's cost it refused to give in to all of the union's demands, and in November 1889 the company suffered its first and only strike. The industrial action resulted in complete victory for the union. Yet, the reasons for the strike were incomprehensible to the mindset of the company's management: they were, after all, providing men, women and children with employment. Following the 1890 Royal Sweating Commission, acts such as the 1891 Factory Act, which was again amended in 1894, and the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act (1894) were set up in order to minimise the risk of such a situation occurring again. Nevertheless, this was a crisis that was to affect internal labour dealings for decades to come.

A major theme from the perspective of management, and a continuing business problem for the company, was its battle against government imposed tariffs and taxes. The sweating revelations not only strengthened the demands for a protective labour legislation, but a protective tariff also.⁴ However, while safeguarding the woollen industry from competing English products entering the country, the high tariff rate also made the importing of plant and other materials required for modern woollen manufacture expensive. As a result, the KWMMCo made many requests to government to lessen the tariff rate on certain products, but with only limited success. By contrast, New South Wales had a policy of free trade, and the

³D.F.Couling, 'The Anti-Sweating Agitation in Dunedin, Christchurch and Auckland. 1888-90,' BA (Hons) Thesis, (Dunedin, University of Otago, 1973), pp. 5-7. See also K.Clark, 'A History of the Canterbury Trades and Labour Council, 1889-1937,' MA Thesis, (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1993) and J.E.Martin *Holding the Balance* (Christchurch, Canterbury University Press, 1996).

company's leaders had the business acumen to establish a branch in Sydney, which proved initially to work in the company's favour.

Establishment of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited

In 1866 the first building on the site where the present mill now stands was erected for the purpose of milling *phormium tenax* (flax).⁵ After a succession of unsuccessful attempts by various owners to run the mill at a profit, it was eventually placed in the private possession of Messrs Ninnis and Purchase, whose business became the first company of its scale to manufacture flax. Keen to find a new and economical way of producing strong fibre, Ninnis and Purchase experimented by using the battery or stamper method.⁶ Unfortunately, their experiment did not pay, and the premises, building and plant became the property of F. Jenkins, a Christchurch businessman.⁷ In 1873 a new company was established by a group of enterprising men.⁸ Holding 2000 shares to the value of £20,000, the new concern

⁴ J.B. Condliffe, *New Zealand in the Making* (London, George Allen and Unwin Limited, 1936 and 1959) p.193.

⁵ *The Press*, 15 March 1928, p.5.

⁶ *The Press*, Supplement, 26 March 1879, p.1. Method: The stamper beats flax leaves on a wooden drum built of strong timber, so that the end of the timber meets the blow.

⁷ *The Press*, Supplement 26 March 1879, p.1

⁸ *Ibid.* The directors of the Canterbury Flax Spinning, Weaving and Fibre Company were: Messrs **Robert Heaton Rhodes**: (1815-1884). In 1850 Rhodes, the fifth and last of his brothers to come to New Zealand, arrived in Wellington. In August of the same year he joined two of his brothers in a partnership under the title of W.B., R.H., and G. Rhodes. William, the senior partner, directed partnership policy from Wellington, while Robert and George lived at Purau on Banks Peninsula and managed various Peninsula stations (George eventually moved to a large property held near Timaru). By 1851 they also owned various sections chiefly in the Lyttelton district. R.H.Rhodes took considerable interest in public matters and when in 1853 the first Canterbury Provincial Council was established, he was elected to a seat. Indeed, he continued to represent Akaroa in the Council for many years. In 1863 Robert, his brother George, and Robert Wilkin bought St Leonards, a large property in Amuri consisting of over 90,000 acres. Bounded on the North by the Waiau and on the South by the Hurunui it was considered to be good clean tussock country. By 1876 the brothers owned property all over Canterbury in over sixty different localities, including Rangiora, Kaiapoi, Oxford, Alford Forest and the Levels in South Canterbury. There were North Island properties as well, often managed by the youngest brother, Joseph, who lived in Hawkes Bay. After living for years at Purau, Robert moved in 1866 to Christchurch where his home Elmwood was built. Still very public-spirited, Rhodes gave eight of the peal of ten bells for the city's cathedral in 1881. He was, however, in bad health and remained so until his death three years later. R.H. Rhodes was worth over £500,000 when he died in 1884. A.E. Woodhouse, *George Rhodes of the Levels and his Brothers*, (Auckland, Whitcombe and Tombs Limited, 1937), pp. 47, 51, 52, 53, 133, 161, 162. and Canterbury Museum, *G.R.Macdonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies*, Number R172
Robert Wilkin: b1820, 1886d. The son of a farmer, Wilkin arrived in New Zealand in 1858. He was a property owner in conjunction with R.H. Rhodes, the most important land holdings being St

was called the Canterbury Flax Spinning, Weaving and Fibre Company Limited. Its purpose was to develop further the operations practised by the previous mill with the object of dressing and processing the flax fibre and making it into sacks, scrim and packs.⁹ Nevertheless, when it was found that the machinery needed for this purpose would involve an outlay equivalent to half the capital, the directors and shareholders decided to abandon the treatment of flax and act on a clause in the company's Memorandum of Association, which authorised its activities to be transferred to the manufacture of woollen goods if conditions were favourable.¹⁰

Leonards in North Canterbury and Carelton. His biggest speculation was, however, Lake Wanaka Station. The *G.R. Macdonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies* notes that in 1871 he was a grain and seed merchant and had spent part of his life as a skin and wool merchant. He was a member of the Timaru Provincial Council, and in 1865-1866 he was a Member of Parliament for Kaiapoi. He was also a long-time member of the Christchurch Club and a director of the New Zealand Shipping Company in 1881. Canterbury Museum (hereafter CM), Macdonald Dictionary (hereafter MD), Number W479.

William Hannibal Lane: b1828, 1903d. Born in New South Wales, Lane was a miller by trade. Having already bought Inwoods Mill, Hereford Street, he moved to Christchurch with his wife and family in 1862. He was the director of the Christchurch Gas Company in 1866, treasurer of St Paul's Church, Papanui, member of the Avon Road Board in 1868, original shareholder and member of the Canterbury Club in 1872, and member of the Christchurch City Council in 1873. CM, MD, Number L52.

James Purvis Jameson: b1824, d1896. Born in London, he later became a merchant of Manchester. Jameson came to New Zealand in 1863 and opened a store on Colombo Street between Armagh and Gloucester Streets. He was the secretary of the Christchurch Baths Company, elected to the Christchurch City Council in January 1867, re-elected to the council in 1870 and in the same year became mayor of the city. He was also a member of the East Christchurch School Committee in 1874 and was returned to the Christchurch City Council in 1877. CM, MD, Number J61.

James Alexander Bird: b1821, 1903d. Considered the father of insurance in Christchurch, he arrived here in 1868 as an agent for a London insurance company. A pillar of society, he was an active member of various committees. Indeed, in 1871 he was a member of the Committee of the Canterbury A. and P. Association. In 1876 he was elected to the Christchurch City Council and re-elected the following year. CM, MD, Number B444.

W.H.Packer: Unfortunately, it is unclear as to which W.H.Packer actually invested in the company, although there was a Henry William Packer b1831 – d1890, who was renowned for his love of music and for investing in various Christchurch businesses. CM, MD, Number P5.

W. Wood: Like Packer, it is difficult to tell which W.Wood was an investor as there were so many Woods during this period, with little information written about them.

F. Jenkins: Born in 1928, Jenkins arrived by the *Randolph* in 1860. He soon built a sawmill and joinery shop on the corner of St Asaph and Ferry Road. He was a successful contractor for the Provincial Government Buildings, and the original building for Sunnyside Hospital at £3000. He was elected to the Chamber of Commerce in 1869 and again in 1872 and 1878; however, due to the depression of the 1880s he was made bankrupt in 1884 and had to resign from his various offices. CM, MD, Number J94

⁹ G.A. Tait, *Manufacturing in New Zealand* (Auckland, Cranwell Publishing Company Limited, 1959) p. 20.

¹⁰ Ibid.

While the expense of required machinery may have acted as a catalyst for the change to woollen manufacture, a report in *The Press* provides another possible reason. It would appear that flax milling in general was not proving very profitable, and in fact the Canterbury Flax Association wound up all accounts and affairs of the organization only a year after the Flax Spinning and Weaving Company began.¹¹ Dogged by poor judgement, limited business acumen and bad luck, the problems of the first company were to be visited upon the second.

By no means all businesses survived their initial beginnings in the recently settled district of Kaiapoi, and the new Canterbury Spinning and Weaving Company was to be no exception. The fledgling company did, however, get off to a hopeful start, and by 1875 the first manufactured goods produced by the business were on sale in Christchurch.¹² By turning to the production of blankets and flannels the company was also given the opportunity to claim the provincial government's reward of £2,000.¹³ However, inexperienced management, a lack of capital, and a distinct lack of skilled workers were to prove the company's downfall.¹⁴ According to P. Wood, the feeding of wool full of thistles, gorse, fernsticks and other rubbish through the machines caused frequent stoppages to repair broken threads.¹⁵ This problem occurred because the only two skilled workers, brought out from England, had left; one went to South Africa soon after arriving, and the other, who also happened to be the mill manager, was dismissed.¹⁶ The outcome was a large loss within the first year of over £2,000. As a result the entire concern was put up for auction in July 1877, together with the new plant recently ordered from England.¹⁷ Purchased by the Honourable J.T. Peacock for only £7,000, the present company procured his interest the following July and was registered with a capital of £15,000 in fifteen shares of £1,000.¹⁸ The chairman of the new Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing

¹¹ *The Press*, 18 July 1874, p. 2.

¹² *The Press*, 15 March 1928, p.5.

¹³ *The Press*, Supplement, 26 March 1879, p.1.

¹⁴ *Ibid*

¹⁵ P. Wood, *Kaiapoi 'A Search for Identity'* (Rangiora, Waimakariri District Council, 1993) p. 102.

¹⁶ *Ibid*

¹⁷ *The Press*, Supplement, 26 March 1879, p.1.

¹⁸ *The Weekly Press*, 22 June 1898, p.8. Those existing proprietors not mentioned in the text were:

Company was Isaac Wilson, and under his skilful direction the company was to make a profit of £700 in its first financial year, a success that was to become routine. Wilson (1840-1912) was born in Westmorland, England and arrived in Lyttelton in 1854. He eventually moved to Church-bush, Kaiapoi, where, in 1862, he started a passenger coach on the North Road between Kaiapoi and Christchurch. Wilson also went into the grain and milling business, but the bulk of his attention remained with the KWMCo. A leader within the community, he was not only a member of the

George Coup: b1836, 1920d. Coup left England to try gold mining in Australia in 1854 and stayed there for six years. He came to New Zealand in 1860 and joined his father in Kaiapoi who had arrived in the country with the rest of the Coup family in 1855. George was once again drawn to mining when he went to the goldfields in Gabriel's Gully, Otago. Although he later bought land at Waipara, he maintained an interest in mining, becoming director of the West Coast Goldmining Company and holding interests in various Australian mines. Coup was also a diligent member and trustee of the Kaiapoi Wesleyan Church. CM, MD, Number C696.

Robert Coup: b1840, 1918d. Robert came out with his parents in 1855, who bought a farm in Kaiapoi consisting of 82 acres. Later, as a farm owner, he maintained a strong interest in the community, becoming a School Committee Member and a member of the Eyreton Road Board. He was also a member of the original Number 5 Company of Volunteers. CM, MD, Number C697.

Edward Mulcock: b1837, 1915d. Born in Essex, Mulcock came to New Zealand in 1860. A farmer and stock dealer by trade, he was also a member of the Mandeville and Rangiora Road Board, a Flaxton School Committee member in 1868, and in 1875 he was on the Committee of the North A. and P. Association. CM, MD, Number M701.

Thomas Pashby: b1828, 1914d. Pashby arrived in Christchurch in 1853 and eventually made his way to Kaiapoi where he was a saw-miller and farmer. A public spirited man, he was a member of the Kaiapoi Borough Council in 1873, a founder of the Northern A. and P. Association, a member of the North Waimak River Board, Chairman of the Farmers Club, and a member of the first School Committee held in 1873. However, he and his family lost their home to a bush fire and eventually moved to a farm in Woolston in 1902. CM, MD, Number P155.

W. Sansom: b1844, 1922d. Sansom arrived in New Zealand in 1858 and initially worked as a coach proprietor and mail contractor. He later bought a 300 acre farm in Southbrook and farmed there for some years before finally moving to Christchurch in 1886. He maintained his interest in the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited and remained on the Board of Directors for over 30 years. CM, MD, Number S45.

Joseph Harold Evans: b1846, 1922d. Born in Liverpool, Evans came to New Zealand and worked in a grain merchant's in Kaiapoi, later becoming a junior partner in the Kaiapoi Produce Company. In 1882 he was made auditor of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited. CM, MD, Number E152.

James Wood: There are very few details of this man, and not even his birth date is known, the *G.R. Macdonald Dictionary* stating only that he was an investor in the company. CM, MD, Number 679.

John Wesley Ellen: b1842, 1884d. Ellen arrived in New Zealand in 1862. A wool sorter and scourer, he set up business in Kaiapoi. Community minded, he was elected to the Borough Council in 1869, and was also mayor of Kaiapoi in 1876 and 1877; furthermore, he was chairman of Waimakariri Harbour Board in its first year, 1877. CM, MD, Number E75.

John Ballantyne: b1825, 1899d. Ballantyne arrived in New Zealand in 1872 and worked his first seven years here in Christchurch in a local drapery business. After seven years (he agreed only to work at the business for this specified period of time) he sold his interest in the business to a partnership which included his sons. Free of the drapery concern he became a farmer. While his sons

Mandeville and Rangiora Road Board, but a member of the provincial committee also. He held the Kaiapoi Parliamentary seat, was mayor of Kaiapoi in 1885, and was an active member of the Kaiapoi Borough Council for many years. Wilson remained chairman of the company until 1883 when he became ill and was replaced by George Henry Blackwell, another of the founding investors.¹⁹

Like Wilson, Blackwell, took a keen interest in the success of the Kaiapoi township and quite naturally the newly established company. Blackwell was born in Leamington, Warwickshire, England in 1840. In 1861 he purchased his discharge from the Royal navy, left England in the following year for New Zealand on the ship *Huntress*, and settled at Kaiapoi. Subsequently he started as a storekeeper and succeeded in founding the principal business of the town, Blackwells General Store. He filled most of the public offices of the town, serving eight years as a member of the Kaiapoi Borough Council, beginning in 1872, and three years as mayor. He served 25 years with the Kaiapoi Fire Brigade, was Justice of the Peace in the Borough, a member of the Wesleyan church and of the Temperance movement, president of the Kaiapoi Cricket Club, founder of the Kaiapoi Park, and a Sunday school teacher for 40 years. Blackwell died in 1914, but his leadership of the company saw the business expand greatly both nationally and internationally.²⁰

Most of the investors in the KWMCo had an active involvement with business and the community. John Thomas Peacock was no exception. The original purchaser of the concern and an ongoing investor, he was born in 1827 in New South Wales. He came to Wellington in 1854 and moved to Lyttelton in 1855. Elected to the provincial council in 1861, he was also an original director of the Canterbury Steam Navigation Company. In 1868 Peacock was elected to Parliament for Lyttelton, and re-elected in 1871. He was an original shareholder and member of the Canterbury Club in 1872 and for years was president. Elected to the Avon Road Board in 1873,

made a name for themselves in the clothing business, little is known about John Ballantyne. He was noted, however, for his strong interest in the Wesleyan church. CM, MD, Number B87.

¹⁹ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand: Industrial, Descriptive, Historical, Biographical, Facts, Figures, Illustrations*, Canterbury Provincial District, Volume 3, Part II, p. 438 and CM, MD, Number W587.

he was also a founding director of the New Zealand Shipping Company during the same year. A member of the Lyttelton Harbour Board, he was elected chairman in 1884. Peacock had varied business interests and was a large shareholder of the Christchurch Tramway Company, a director of the Christchurch Meat Company, and a director of the Lyttelton Gas Company. He owned property near Kaiapoi, a farm called Wai-iti, on the Waimakariri. Like many of the other investors he was an energetic church goer, in fact, Peacock was senior steward of the Methodist Church in St Albans. He died in 1905.²¹

Edwin Parnham was yet another community minded investor. Parnham (1835-1911) arrived at Lyttelton by the ship *Glentanner* in 1857. His first job was sawing timber in the Kaiapoi bush; he then bought 500 acres near Kaiapoi, but decided to move to the goldfields for a short time before returning and finding work in a butchery. A year later he bought the business with G. Weston, and five years later he bought Weston out. He owned various farms, including Beachvale near Kaiapoi and 220 acres near Sefton. Active in local politics, Parnham sat on the Borough Council for over 12 years, was twice mayor of Kaiapoi, and became Chairman of the Waimakariri Harbour Board in 1882. He maintained his involvement with the KWMMCo not only as a shareholder, but also as a founding director.²²

Shareholders such as Richard Moore, (1849-1936) who had arrived in New Zealand in 1851 with his parents, had virtually grown up in the Kaiapoi township and were keen to invest in a business that could see the district expand further. Born in London in 1849, Moore first entered into business on his own account when at 19 years of age he became a coach-builder, wheelwright, and saddler. After 15 years at this trade he joined the firm of the Kaiapoi Produce and Milling Company, eventually taking over the business and selling it to the Kaiapoi Produce and Shipping Company. Moore was twice elected member of the House of Representatives, he was member of the Borough Council, and mayor from 1884-87.

²⁰ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, p.327 and CM, MD, Number B496.

²¹ CM, MD, Number P234.

He was also chairman of the Waimakariri Harbour Board, and a member of the local building society.²³

Advertising and Exhibitions

In February 1886 the question of regularly advertising in Christchurch newspapers was discussed amongst the KWMCo's directors. It was thought not advisable to advertise.²⁴ This perplexing response, given the growing market in Christchurch, may stem from the notion that to the Directors, the company's best form of self-promotion lay in industrial, national and international exhibitions. This was also a period in which exhibitions provided the opportunity to define a national identity.²⁵ According to R.W. Rydell, the promoters of international extravaganzas attempted to boost the economic development of the cities and regions in which they were held as well as to advance the material growth of the country at large.²⁶ However, while serving to put the nations and people of the world on display, these exhibitions also represented the host country as that nation's populace would like it to be, rather than how it actually was.²⁷ For New Zealand, international exhibitions were an opportunity to express a clear and growing spirit of rivalry between the dominion and other white nation members of the empire and, indeed, England itself.²⁸ They could show pride in their achievements while also providing the ideal chance for emerging industries to make a claim on domestic and international markets. The KWMCo certainly wanted to make that claim, for fairs provided manufacturers and commercial interests with opportunities to promote the mass consumption of their products.²⁹

²² *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, p. 435 and CM, MD, Number P117.

²³ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, p. 432 and CM, MD, Number M558.

²⁴ MB114/A1, p. 85, Meeting of Directors, 17 February 1886.

²⁵ J. Mansfield Thompson (ed), *Farewell Colonialism* (Palmerston North, Dunmore Press, 1998), p. 17.

²⁶ R. W. Rydell, *All The World's A Fair* (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1984), p. 2.

²⁷ J. Phillips, 'Exhibiting Ourselves: The Exhibitions and National Identity' in Thompson (1998), p.17.

²⁸ R.W.Rydell, p. 2.

²⁹ Ibid.

Only two years after the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company began operations, it was decided to attend the fledgling Wellington Exhibition of 1881. It would seem the few other woollen manufacturers of the period had not completely grasped the benefits of exhibiting their wares, for while other woollen companies sent some goods in to be displayed, the KWMMCo was the only woollen factory that showed a full exhibition of their manufactured products.³⁰ With a large assortment of productions including yarn (coloured and white), hosiery, flannel, serge, tweeds and blankets, that were all “very much admired,” the young company began a marketing strategy that was to last for decades.³¹ So proficient were they at exhibiting their goods, they would continue to remain at the top of their field.

Exhibitions also served to display advances in industrial techniques. When laying the foundation stone for the 1906 Christchurch Exhibition, Richard Seddon quoted President McKinley, stating, “Expositions were the timekeepers of progress.”³² Seddon’s intention was to demonstrate New Zealand’s economic success and proclaim our greatness in having the “highest percentage per head of wealth in the civilised world.”³³ However, as the ‘timekeepers of progress,’ exhibitions also served to present a showcase of technological advances, vital especially to a burgeoning woollen industry. After the successful Melbourne Exhibition, the KWMMCo expected to order enough new machinery to require a new building, proposed to be 130 feet in width by 84 feet in length to house it all.³⁴

Expositions certainly provided the impetus for the KWMMCo’s growing overseas reputation. Even though the Christchurch International Exhibition proved to be

³⁰ *Appendices to the Journal of the House of Representatives* (hereafter *AJHR*), (1881), F-I, ‘Wellington Industrial Exhibition,’ H-6a, p. 1-3. In 1881 there were four woollen mills in New Zealand: Mosgiel, Kaiapoi, Roslyn and Ashburton.

³¹ *AJHR*, (1881), F-I, ‘Wellington Industrial Exhibition,’ H-6a, pp. 1-3.

³² J. Phillips, ‘Exhibiting Ourselves: The Exhibitions and National Identity’ in Thompson, (1998), p. 18.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *The Press*, 24 September 1880, p. 3.

financially unsuccessful in 1882, 226,360 people still attended.³⁵ With a population of 484,864 in the colony in 1880 it would appear that, despite an increase during that two year period, a large proportion of the country (along with international visitors) attended.³⁶ If the sheer number of visitors did not increase the company's international reputation, then it certainly cemented its local and national one, despite being such a youthful venture. The Christchurch Industrial Exhibition of 1895 was a great success, and the grand display of the KWMCo was considered to be not only the most attractive, but also the most instructive exhibit. It occupied a frontage of 50 feet displaying 105 different patterns of tweed cloths alone. The light class of goods for ladies' dresses was fully represented, together with fine qualities of blankets, eight kinds of flannel underclothing, and hosiery in great variety, "all proving the great expansion which the business of the company has undergone."³⁷ Indeed, its sheer success proved to be a source of national pride.

Another more important event was the Christchurch International Exhibition of 1906-07. Here the company's more forward-thinking directors used an innovative marketing scheme to boost advertising at the exhibit. The issue of celluloid postcards bearing the company's advertisement for distribution amongst visitors to the exhibition was a novel idea which proved most fruitful, although, as Illustration 1 indicates, postcards had been utilised by the company as an effective promotion tool before the Exhibition.³⁸ Nonetheless, numerous visitors from other parts of the world had complimented the company on its display.³⁹ The company's popularity would certainly have been enhanced upon being awarded eleven gold medals, four special awards, and two silver medals by the exhibition authorities.⁴⁰

³⁵ G. McLean, 'The Colony Commodified: Trade, Progress and the Real Business of Exhibitions', in Thompson, (1998), p. 29.

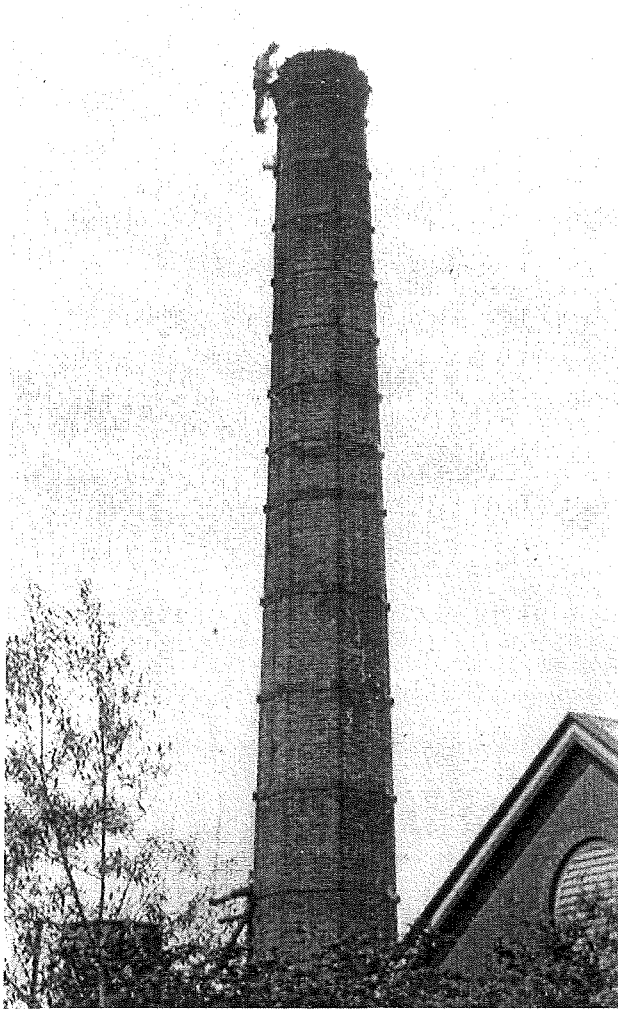
³⁶ J.B. Condliffe, 1959., p.38. It is important to temper this claim by noting that many visitors would be local people who repeatedly returned to the Exhibition..

³⁷ *AJHR*, (1895), H, 'Christchurch Industrial Exhibition,' H-30, pp. 1-4.

³⁸ MB114/A4, p. 16, Meeting of Directors, 21 February 1906. Unfortunately, while the Canterbury Museum does have photographs of the Exhibition, including a few of the KWMCo's display, none of the post cards from the Exhibition have been catalogued.

³⁹ MB114/A4, p. 81, Annual General Meeting, 23 August 1907.

⁴⁰ MB114/A4, p. 81, Annual General Meeting, 23 August 1907.



III. 1

Original Chimney of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill. c1900

Photographers: Douglas Jones Photographers Kaiapoi N.Z.

This photograph was initially used on post cards, and served as an excellent way to promote the mill nationally and internationally. Note the man at the top checking the safety of the brickwork.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E106

Table 1:

**Some of the Larger and More Successful Industrial, National and
International Exhibitions Known to Have Been Attended by the Company
Between 1890 - 1915**

Christchurch Industrial Exhibition 1895
Wellington Exhibition 1896
Auckland Exhibition 1898
Jubilee Exhibition 1900
Blenheim Exhibition 1904
Christchurch International Exhibition 1906
Irish International Exhibition 1907 ?
Wellington Exhibition 1911
Auckland Industrial Exhibition 1913

It appeared initially that promotion of the KWMCo in local newspapers was used on only special occasions. Generally they were not even advertisements; rather they were reports which explained some new and innovative piece of machinery from the 'homeland' which would continue to keep the company at the top of its field. Yet a reason for the directors' lack of faith in regular local and national advertising may have stemmed from a potentially damaging incident in January 1887. An article was written and printed by the *Lyttleton Times* on 14 January stating that the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited was under liquidation.⁴¹ This was most unfortunate as the company, that financial year, had made a clear profit of £7,028 and was able to give its shareholders a further dividend of 6%, despite there being a general depression.⁴² As the article was an extremely serious matter that threatened to ruin the company's reputation, it is not surprising the directors demanded an explanation.⁴³ A reply from the editor stated that an absurd blunder had been made by some members of the staff, but that it was not caused by malice and they

⁴¹ MB114/A1, p. 111, Meeting of Directors, 19 January 1887.

⁴² MB114/A1, p. 131, Annual General Meeting, 27 October 1887.

⁴³ MB114/A1, p. 111, Meeting of Directors, 19 January 1887.

promised to rectify the matter in the next paper.⁴⁴ This they did; however, from this moment on it would appear relations between the company and the district's more left-wing newspaper were always to remain strained.

Despite this apparent setback, the opportunity to reap the benefits gained by frequent marketing to an increasingly literate audience became too much for the company's directors to ignore. Indeed, only a year after the *Lyttleton Times* 'incident' it was resolved to advertise in local papers the company's manufactured products of pure wool.⁴⁵

Although the company initially appeared to consider newspaper advertisements beneath their dignity, growing competition forced mass marketing on a large scale to become a regular occurrence. During the depression of the 1880s and early 1890s a number of woollen mills were erected. In 1881 there were four in the colony; by 1891 that figure had doubled.⁴⁶ Concerns arose among KWMCo shareholders that more mills were becoming established in New Zealand than could profitably be sustained by the present population.⁴⁷ By 1905 eight mills existed and competition upon the national market was such that the KWMCo was essentially forced into extensive self-promotion. Indeed, throughout April of that year 35,000 of the company's fashion plates, inserted in the daily papers, circulated throughout the North Island.⁴⁸ Inserts promoting the company's rugs were also placed in newspapers, and labels depicting the Kaiapoi mill were sewn onto the rugs, as shown in Illustrations 2 and 3. By 1914 newspaper advertising campaigns were being suggested by management in order to capture a larger portion of the growing population. An increasing willingness by the company's directors to spend huge figures on such efforts (for the campaign of 1914, £1,000 was spent) indicates the developing importance and scale of this kind of advertising.

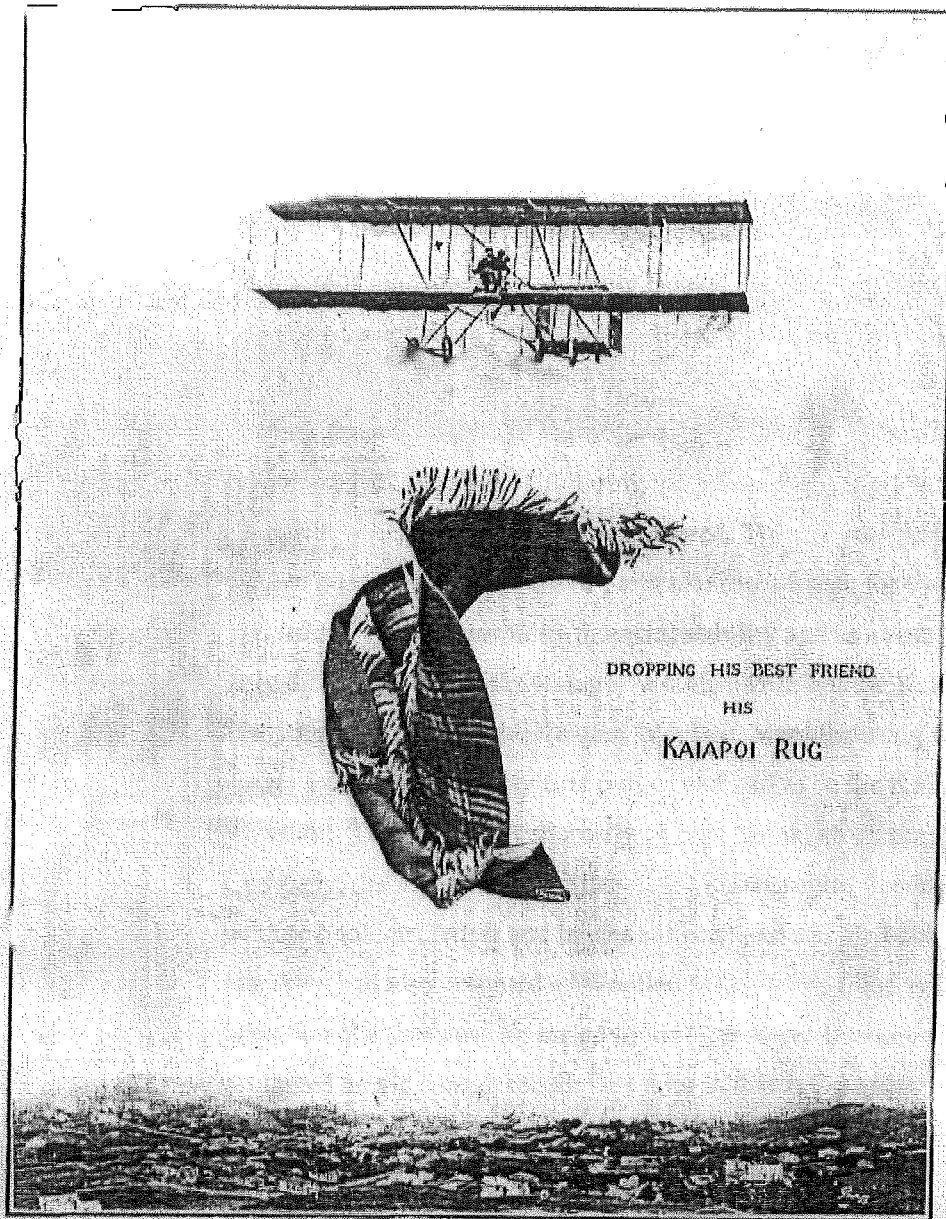
⁴⁴ MB114/A1, p. 111, Meeting of Directors, 19 January 1887.

⁴⁵ MB114/A1, p. 146, Meeting of Directors, 21 March 1888.

⁴⁶ J.E. Bartlett, 1987, p. 27.

⁴⁷ MB114/A1, p. 103, Annual General Meeting, 27 October 1886.

⁴⁸ MB114/A3, p. 234, Meeting of Directors, 15 April 1905.



THE WORLD'S BEST RUGS

"KAIAPOI" RUGS Are unquestionably the best rugs manufactured in the World, and are indispensable when aeroplaning, motoring by car or launch, driving, camping, or travelling by rail or steamer. . . . As a Christmas Gift to friends abroad, a "Kaiapoi" Rug proves most acceptable; or, in the shape of a Wedding Present, to accompany the happy couple through life, nothing is more welcome or better appreciated than a "Kaiapoi" Rug.

ALL DRAPERS SELL "KAIAPOI" RUGS ASK FOR THEM

The Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Co. Limited

CHRISTCHURCH

AUCKLAND

WELLINGTON

DUNEDIN

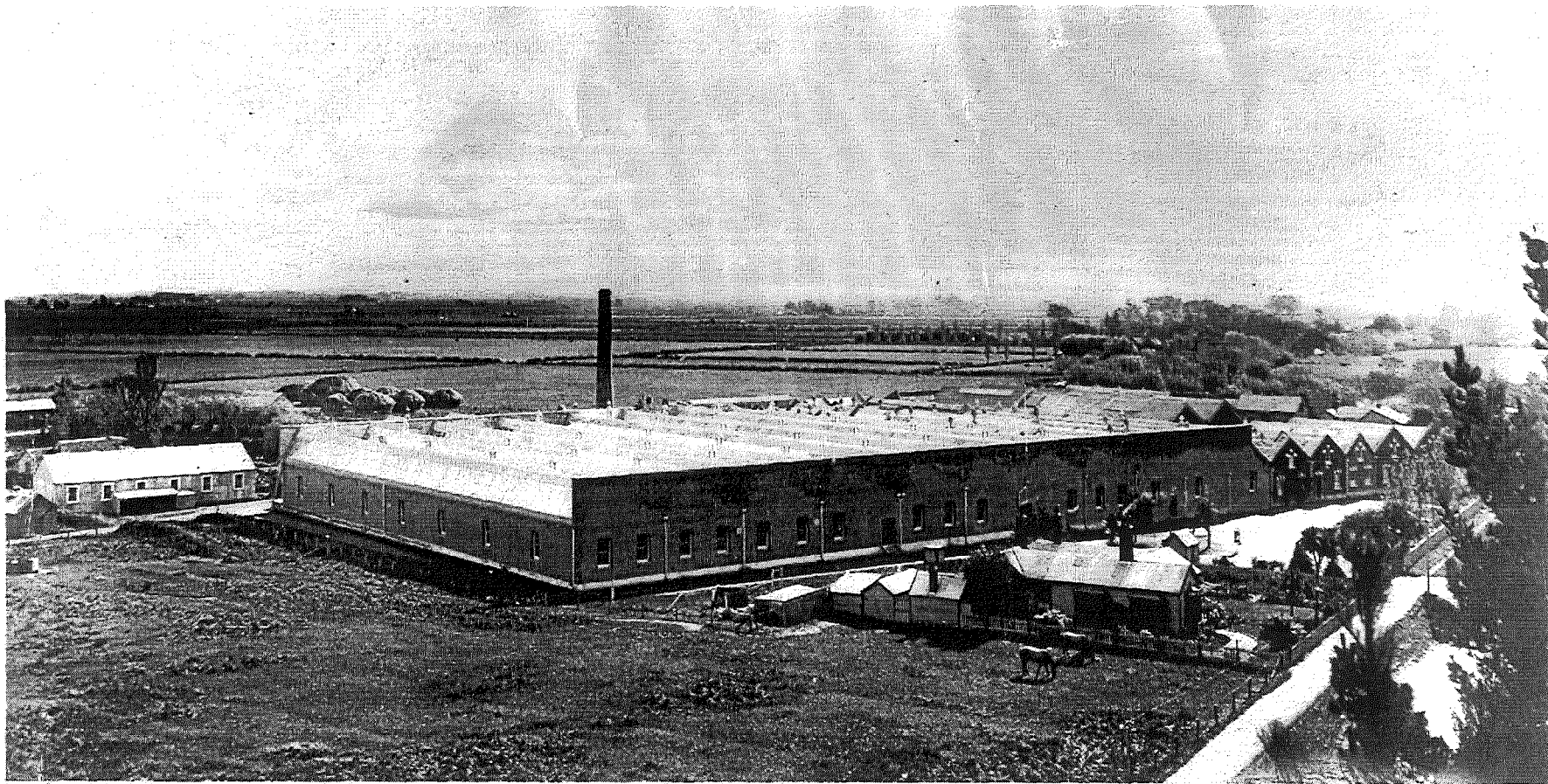
LONDON

III. 2

Kaiapoi Rugs c1912

The company was certainly keen on being considered the world's best producers of rugs. Here in this advertising insert possibly for the Weekly Press, the rugs versatility and quality is lauded.

Courtesy of Dr Rice, History Department, University of Canterbury



III. 3

Tree-top view of the Kaiapoi Woollen mill in 1910. The photographer, I.N.Eagle, wanting to capture the expanse of the mill climbed up the tallest tree in the neighbouring domain, carrying all his heavy equipment. Management was so impressed with the photograph they used the design as a label on rugs and company letterheads. Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum Reference PF/E327

Newspaper promotions could not only capture large markets, but greatly enhance the company's repute while building on the population's pride and self-esteem, and at the same time heighten overseas interest. Just such an opportunity arose in August 1895 when HRH the Princess of Wales ordered and received two dresses made by Messrs Ballantyne and Company.⁴⁹ This order was a boon to the KWMMCo and the New Zealand woollen industry in general as both dresses were made from the company's fine dress tweed.⁵⁰ An acknowledged leader of fashion in England, the Princess of Wales, much like her modern day counterpart, provided a certain distinction to anything she wore, and as such she proved to be an excellent ambassador for New Zealand made tweeds. National interest in the company's success could also be enhanced by reports of famous visitors to the Kaiapoi mill. Lord Glasgow visited in February 1897 and was presented with two of the company's popular Kaiapoi rugs; a year later the country's Governor, along with the accompanying press, visited and was presented with the same products.⁵¹ By the time Lord and Lady Plunket visited in 1905 the company's rugs were very well known and held in high regard. In a report of the company's 1908 annual general meeting, it was stated that

Another testimony to the quality of the company's goods was contained in a letter from a member of the House, who had been in the company of a paymaster of one of the [visiting] American warships who was greatly interested in the company's rugs, and who had invested £124 in their goods to take to America.

Such an opportunity to increase the KWMMCo's international repute, this time in North America, would have been much appreciated.

Technical Innovations and Expansion

It could be argued that in many New Zealand woollen mills, the introduction of new technology was not a priority and that labour productivity was improved by keeping

⁴⁹ *The Press*, 26 July 1895, p. 4.

⁵⁰ MB114/A2, p. 132, Meeting of Directors, 21 August 1895.

⁵¹ MB114/A2, p. 192, Meeting of Directors, 21 February 1897.

hours to a maximum and wages to a minimum.⁵² As we shall see further on in this chapter, the KWMCo was guilty of the latter, but as for the former it must be stated that for a company whose reputation was based on the quality of its product, new technology was of definite importance.

Before the woollen industry was established in New Zealand, Bartlett states the mechanisation of woollen mills was already largely complete.⁵³ The first power looms had already been invented and had been in use in England for some decades, so then in order to increase productivity the New Zealand mills needed to import faster machines and more of them.⁵⁴ This the KWMCo did with gusto, in 1895 spending £2,370 in new machinery from the motherland and £3,353 in new buildings to house them in, a total of £5,723.⁵⁵ By the following year the total value of the company's properties and plant had reached the enormous sum of £47,550 8s 10d.⁵⁶ A willingness to spend such sums indicates the company's intent to make the most of production while maintaining and improving quality.

The KWMCo's directors had had a policy of keeping their plant up to date since the company's inception. In 1880 a report was printed in *The Press* advertising the many new labour and time saving additions to the Kaiapoi mill. A new wool scouring machine was capable, under the management of only two 'lads,' of scouring 2000lbs of wool in a day. The latest condensing machine had also been imported: this performed the operation of 'scribbling' more satisfactorily than any other on the premises, and had all the modern advantages for effectually combing or carding out the fibres of wool prior to the spinning process.⁵⁷ On the ground floor of the mill eighteen new looms were installed, and two additional warping mills, to keep pace with the looms, had also been introduced.⁵⁸ A hydro-extractor was also erected; its purpose was to dry cloth quickly, and it was capable of working to 4000

⁵² J.E. Bartlett, 1987, p.5.

⁵³ Ibid., p.59.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ MB114/A2, p. 143, Annual General Meeting, 25 October 1895.

⁵⁶ MB114/A2, p. 179, Annual General Meeting, 28 October 1896.

⁵⁷ *The Press*, 24 September 1880, p. 3. See Glossary.

revolutions per minute.⁵⁹ By maintaining and modernising plant and machinery, the company directors served to satisfy shareholders that they were not only keeping up with competition both nationally and internationally, but leading it.

Shareholders were also kept happy by the reduced costs brought on by adding efficient and modern technology. A number of benefits were created by installing the Gulcher Electric Light System in 1883.⁶⁰ The first was that providing electric light was much cheaper than the old system of gasoline lighting; it provided twice the light so that it was much less taxing on the eyes, and the dangers of poisoning or explosion from leakages of gas were also reduced by the changeover.⁶¹ Machines run on electric power were tested in the company's Christchurch clothing factory in 1905; however, it was found to be more expensive than gas. After eight months' testing, managers found they had paid £135 for electric power whilst the cost for gas during the corresponding months in the previous year had been £102. Nevertheless, they did admit certain advantages: electricity was a cleaner motive power and required less supervision. Using the amount of power in the factory that they did (4,000 units of electric power per month), the directors felt they were entitled to some concession from the City Council.⁶² It is not stated whether the council provided such a concession, but the company certainly continued using electric power, its benefits were simply too important to ignore.

Other important forms of efficient technology that reduced overall costs included the largest engine made in the colony for its time and the introduction of the motorcar. The installation of the engine in 1897 proved to be the cause of quite some publicity. Reports in newspapers upon its establishment were full of praise; *The Press* stating, "not only Canterbury, but the colony may be proud."⁶³ The 450 horse-power

⁵⁸ *The Press*, 24 September 1880, p. 3.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ MB114/A1, p. 6, Meeting of Directors, 30 June 1883.

⁶¹ J. Watson, 'Crisis and Change,' Phd Thesis, (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1984) p. 22.

⁶² MB114/A3, p. 251, Annual General Meeting, 25 August 1905. See also J. Watson's, 'The Age of the Motor,' in *Links: a History of Transport and New Zealand Society* (Wellington, GP Publications, Ministry of Transport, 1996), pp. 171-235.

⁶³ *The Press*, 19 April 1897, p.3.

machine had been entirely made at the foundry of Scott Brothers of Christchurch and local pride was certainly riding high.⁶⁴ Its installation had proved very necessary as the company's production at the mill had greatly increased over the years. Originally the company had set up a 20 horse-power expansive horizontal condensing engine that had been made in Manchester. In 1882, growing production forced the company to replace it with an 80 horse-power horizontal compound engine, working to 60lbs pressure, again made by Scott Brothers.⁶⁵ However, the new machine, which had a new brick building built to house it, could work to a pressure of 95lbs per square inch.⁶⁶ The introduction of the motorcar was another form of new technology that the company made early use of. A company car provided the opportunity for the Christchurch based directors to visit the Kaiapoi mill more often and also served as a transport mode for the city's travellers (representatives).⁶⁷ Speed was the saving grace of the motorcar: it may not have been able to run as cheaply or as cleanly as the horse and carriage, but stores were serviced faster and more regularly.

New and innovative technology helped increase production which in turn facilitated profits, and with more profits came expansion of business. One of the most visible signs of the KWMC's expanding business was its building extensions. The mill was to benefit from this building programme over the years as old wooden buildings were replaced by brick ones with concrete floors, which greatly reduced the chance of fires. However, the expansion of business premises into the city itself was due to a distinct need to be at the centre of industrial life in the South Island. Visions of Kaiapoi becoming a city had long gone, and while the distinctive mills were to provide employment for the bulk of Kaiapoi's working inhabitants, this small industrial town was simply not large enough for the head office to remain there. So, when the new warehouse and factory were built in Christchurch in 1882, it was not long before these premises also became the company's headquarters. In 1895, it was

⁶⁴ *The Press*, 19 April 1897, p. 3.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ MB114/A3, p. 20, Meeting of Directors, 4 April 1906.

thought appropriate to add to their already extensive premises in Cashel Street, and the western portion of the warehouse and factory was extended right through to Bedford Row.⁶⁸ Three stories in height, the ground floor was to become a packing and stock room; the cutting, pressing and folding department extended into the first floor; and the second floor became a part of the main factory and provided accommodation for nearly one hundred additional workers.⁶⁹ In 1898, with 840 employees, a profit and loss account showing a balance to the credit of £10,508 2s 5d, and a perceived need to cheapen the cost of production and increase out-put, the directors decided to spend the sum of £22,182 on re-modelling properties and plant.⁷⁰ While mill, factory and warehouse accommodation were all increased, it was found necessary to enlarge the warehouse even more. As a result, the directors acquired the Metropolitan Temperance Hotel property, also on Cashel Street, for £4,500. Transforming the hotel into a factory released the current factory for warehouse purposes.⁷¹ A set-back occurred in 1906 when the building was destroyed by fire; as a result, a section on Manchester Street was bought in order to build an extensive factory (Illustration 4). By 1908 this new factory was in full operation. Despite some impediments, expansion of this type not only meant more employment for the local community, it also served to emphasise the company's financial success and with that its growing repute.

That reputation developed nationally and internationally as the KWMMCo began establishing branches throughout the country and in Australia. Increasing trade throughout the 1880s saw the company hire an Auckland traveller to promote business there. J.W.T Gluyas Pascoe proved to be an enthusiastic and capable employee, so when the KWMMCo hired Clark and Sons to sell at least £7,000 worth of their product in Auckland a year on the grounds that the company's Auckland traveller be withdrawn, the Directors transferred Pascoe to Christchurch to be a part

⁶⁸ *The Press*, 12 January 1895, p.9.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

⁷⁰ MB114/ A2, p. 2, Annual General Meeting, 26 October 1898.

⁷¹ MB114/A2, p. 2, Annual General Meeting, 26 October 1898.

of management.⁷² Two years later he was temporarily back in Auckland again as Clark and Sons had lost their contract, managing only £4,754 a year in sales.⁷³ Within a month, and under Pascoe's authority, sales had again improved.⁷⁴ By 1894, trade had developed further and it was resolved that the services of a man be engaged to work in Wellington (as a traveller) at a salary not exceeding £3 per week.⁷⁵ The following year a warehouse was leased in both Wellington and Auckland in order to keep a ready supply of stock on hand.⁷⁶ By 1905 the company had a warehouse in Dunedin for the same purpose, see Illustration 5. Further development of business required a larger warehouse to be leased (with the option to buy after ten years) in Dunedin in 1908, and this property was extended in 1913 to house even more stock.⁷⁷ Expansion throughout New Zealand provided an opportunity not only to meet growing competition within the dominion, but to promote the KWMCo name.

This ability to meet competition was certainly true in the case of expansion to Australia. In a country where a large proportion of its revenue relied upon wool and woollen manufactures, the representation of a New Zealand company would seem almost foolhardy. In 1886, the KWMCo minute books note, however, that they had a representative in Victoria.⁷⁸ Nevertheless, it would appear that employing someone so far from the immediate control of management was to prove problematic. Their first representative was dismissed for drunkenness, and the second quickly resigned for reasons unknown, so the company was soon forced to

⁷² MB114/A1, p. 133, Meeting of Directors, 5 November 1887. It is mentioned within the *G.R.Macdonald Dictionary* that Pascoe became manager of the company's clothing factory in 1882, however, the minute books post-1883 do not seem to back this up, noting that he arrived in Christchurch in 1887. Once here, he became an active member of the Churchman's Club. After being relieved of his position in 1890, he went to Wellington and started a business there as a manufacturer of clothing, but he had very little capital and failed. CM, MD, Number P152.

⁷³ MB114/A1, p. 169, Meeting of Directors, 2 January 1889.

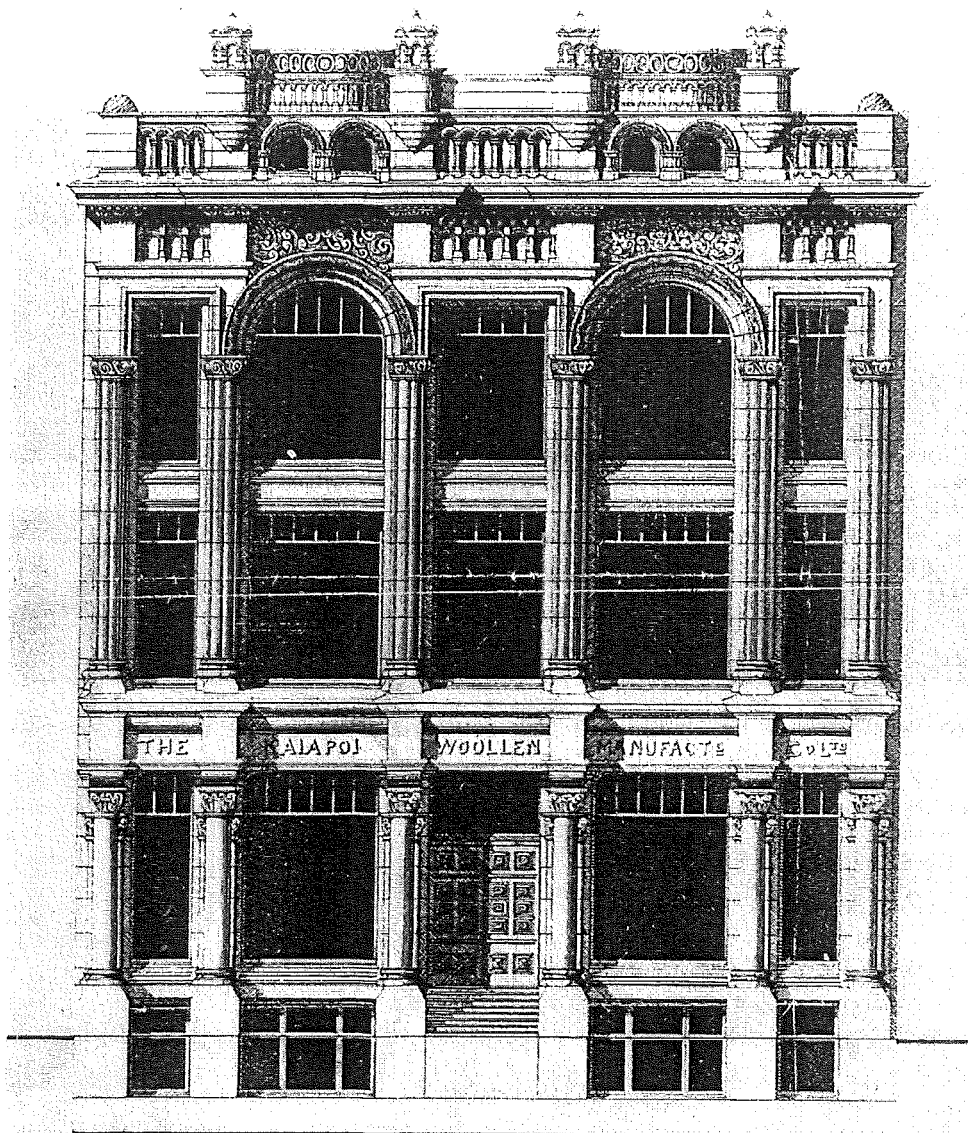
⁷⁴ MB114/A1, p. 172, Meeting of Directors, 20 February 1889.

⁷⁵ MB114/A2, p. 96, Meeting of Directors, 29 August 1894.

⁷⁶ MB114/A2, p. 129, Meeting of Directors, 24 July 1895, and p. 130, 7 August 1895.

⁷⁷ MB114/A4, p.128, Meeting of Directors, 15 April 1908, and MB114/A5, p. 124, Meeting of Directors, 25 November 1913.

⁷⁸ MB114/A1, p. 95, Meeting of Directors, 20 July 1886.



ELEVATION OF THE KAIAPOI WOOLLEN COMPANY'S NEW FACTORY,
MANCHESTER STREET, CHRISTCHURCH.
THE DESIGN IS BY MESSRS S. AND A. LUTTRELL, ARCHITECTS. AND IT IS BEING CARRIED OUT BY MESSRS ENGLAND BROS.

III. 4

An elevation of the then new factory built in Manchester Street, Christchurch, following a devastating fire which destroyed the old factory on Cashel Street. This building, remembered for its beautiful façade, was eventually torn down in the late 1990s to make place for a car yard.

Courtesy of the *Weekly Press*, 13 May 1908 p. 41.



III. 5

Manchester Street, Christchurch pre-1907

Photographers: Muir and Moodie

This photograph is titled Manchester Street, Christchurch; however, as the Manchester Street building was not yet built, and it turned out to be three stories in height, it would seem the photograph was incorrectly titled. It is most likely the premises of the KWMCo's Dunedin branch on Moray Place. According to the Wises New Zealand Post Office Directory 1905, situated on one side of the building was the YMCA Rooms and the Choral Hall and on the other side were Meyer H.R. and J.H. and Company, Commercial Agents. The Dunedin branch was initially set up as a warehouse for the company's goods.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E183

work both Victoria and Tasmania from Christchurch twice yearly.⁷⁹ A year later it was decided to maintain a warehouse in Sydney and engage two travellers from there at no more than £250 per annum.⁸⁰ By 1890, the company's chairman, George Henry Blackwell, called the Sydney venture a decided "failure."⁸¹ Their hopes for the branch they had formed had never been realised; a drought, then flood, then labour troubles, had all added to the general problems of the branch, resulting in a total loss of £1,710. Three years later the directors decided to use Warren and Strang Company to sell KWMMCo products on the following terms: five per cent commission on all orders executed, less rebate for bad debts and goods returned, and in addition a further payment of £100 per annum to cover expenses when sales were under £1,000 and one per cent on sales over this amount.⁸² It would appear Warren and Strang were diligent workers, for the KWMMCo remained with them for some time, even increasing the commission on all orders to six per cent. The expansion into Australia signalled for the company growth, and more importantly, confidence in their ability to compete, in an overseas market.⁸³

Labour Processes and Labour Relations

By examining the KWMMCo's organization of work (that is, the labour process) we can gain an understanding of the relationship between those who owned and controlled the work and workplace and those who became reliant on that work for a living. Bartlett notes that one idea concerning work and management of labour in the nineteenth century is the concept of scientific management:

Scientific management was part of the ongoing attack on the tradition of the craftsmen's control of production and methods. The new management introduced time and motion studies, careful analysis of the production processes, further division of labour, careful costing of processes and constant managerial supervision to try and increase productivity and efficiency.⁸⁴

⁷⁹ MB114/A1, p. 99, Meeting of Directors, 15 September 1886.

⁸⁰ MB114/A1, p. 138, Meeting of Directors, 12 December 1887.

⁸¹ MB114/A1, p. 226, Annual General Meeting, 31 October 1890.

⁸² MB114/A2, p. 71, Meeting of Directors, 27 December 1893.

⁸³ While Australia was the first step for the company in an overseas market it must be stated that New Zealand business undertakings in the Australian colonies during this period were not thought of as international ventures, rather just expansion into a neighbouring colony.

⁸⁴ J.E. Bartlett, 1987., p. 2.

Braverman's acceptance of the theory of 'scientific management' lead to his theory of general deskilling of the working class. He argued that "capitalist dynamics continually transform the labour process, increasingly subjugating workers to their employers and fragmenting their jobs."⁸⁵ However, while Braverman's emphasis on deskilling captures an important feature of the transformation of work during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Gordon, Edwards and Reich argue that certain kinds of re-skilling have also been significant historically.⁸⁶

Indeed, while new technological improvements meant, for many, fewer opportunities to learn new skills and even job loss, others were provided with employment and an upgrading of skills. J. Watson notes that amongst the dominated classes,

new technology was moving the weight of numbers, income and prestige away from the independent working class and towards the white collar class. It did this by de-skilling many occupations and encouraging the growth of large-scale public and private enterprises. The labouring class and much of the independent working class tended to coalesce into a semi-skilled working class.⁸⁷

It could certainly be stated that as a local, yet large-scale private enterprise, the KWMMCo followed such a process of de-skilling. In fact, with the introduction of faster power looms in the Kaiapoi mill and better sewing machines in the Christchurch factory, fewer expert people were needed. Instead, a growing population within the company of semi and un-skilled workers was required to perform increasingly simple and monotonous tasks. The few skilled workers that were required in woollen manufacture (as for wool sorting and weaving) could be imported from 'home.' Nevertheless, it would appear technology did create a need for further re-skilled people. As mechanisation helped increase production and

⁸⁵ D.M. Gordon, R. Edward and M. Reich, *Segmented Work Divided Workers* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 6.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ J. Watson, 1984, p. v.

quality, engineers and mechanics were hired on a full-time basis at the mill to keep new machines in good working order.⁸⁸

While Gordon, Edwards and Reich do not disagree with Braverman's view that deskilling took place, their theory of the development of the labour process differs from his. They propose that overlapping stages of initial *proletarianisation*, *homogenisation* and *segmentation* are the shaping forces of the organization of work.⁸⁹ *Proletarianisation* was the initial stage dating from the 1820s to the 1890s, where a supply of wage workers (producers who must sell their labour power to an employer for a wage or salary) was first created from a previously non-proletarian population.⁹⁰ *Homogenisation*, lasting from the 1870s to the onset of World War II, was the period in which the organization of work and the structure of labour markets were profoundly transformed:

More and more jobs in the capitalist sector of the economy were reduced to a common semi-skilled operative denominator, and control over the labour process became concentrated among employers and their foremen, who used direct supervision or machine pacing to 'drive' their workers.⁹¹

The *segmentation* period, from the 1920s to the present, saw the 'drive' system replaced in many sectors by a series of structured rules and incentives, including collective bargaining agreements.⁹²

The period studied in this thesis fits most closely with Gordon, Edward, and Reich's stage of homogenisation. Direct supervision of staff in the KWMCo was provided by foremen, who controlled both the pace and quality of work within the different departments. They were in turn supervised by a hierarchical system of management.

⁸⁸ Indeed, by the early 1890s the company had employed a head engineer, Walter Broadley, who, along with the company mechanics, was largely responsible for the re-building and refitting of the boiler house and engine room in the Kaiapoi mill, an exercise which cost the enormous sum of £2000. *The Press*, 20 January 1894, p. 10.

⁸⁹ Gordon, Edwards and Reich, p. 2.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

⁹¹ Gordon, Edwards and Reich, p.3.

⁹² *Ibid.* While Braverman, Gordon, Edwards and Reich were studying capitalist labour processes in Britain and the United States, the theories put forward seem equally applicable to the New Zealand situation.

In the case of the Kaiapoi Mill, all the foremen immediately answered to James Leithead (mill manager from 1880-1902). Leithead and the mill foremen are shown in Illustration 6. Leithead was a strict, highly experienced character from Galashiel, the woollen manufacturing district of Scotland. His reputation became legendary for the quality of product that was manufactured in the mill under his charge. In Christchurch, successive warehouse and factory managers also followed the 'drive' system. Unlike Leithead, however, they were under the constant scrutiny of the company's general manager and directors based at head office. The initial motivating force behind the company was, in fact, the Kaiapoi directors like Blackwell and Wilson, who were determined that the company achieve.⁹³ Bartlett, who wrote of the Otago woollen mills, has noted that those directors who were public figures were possibly under a certain amount of scrutiny themselves and were expected to "perform well."⁹⁴ This was certainly the case with Blackwell and Wilson, who were both local business men, members of the council and pillars of society. The reputation of the KWMMCo reflected on them both. The company had to perform well, and in order to do so production had to increase while the costs were reduced, the 'drive' system seemed the perfect option.

The rigours of the 'drive' system, however, resulted in rising labour turnover among production workers.⁹⁵ As we can see in Figures I and IA and II and IIA, a high turnover of factory workers was a problem within the KWMMCo. During 1912, there were 223 people hired in the clothing factory (59 men and 164 women); of those, 29 men left throughout the year along with 69 women.⁹⁶ The smaller and younger costume factory had a surprisingly high turnover rate as well. In the same year 37 people were hired (6 men and 31 women), but at the end of the year only 2 male and

⁹³ James Leithead, was born in New Hampshire, in the United States; he was taken to Scotland at the age of six, and educated at Selkirk. He later worked at a local tweed manufacturer before travelling to Westmoreland in 1857 to take charge of the tweed department in John J. Wilson's manufacturing works; he stayed there for twenty-two years. Leithead arrived at Port Chalmers in 1879 by the ship *Wanganui*, and for the first year was engaged at the Mosgiel woollen mills, at the end of which time he came to Canterbury to take charge of the Kaiapoi woollen mill. *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Volume 3, Canterbury Provincial District, p. 329.

⁹⁴ J.E. Bartlett, 1987, p. 80.

⁹⁵ Gordon, Edwards and Reich, p. 15.

⁹⁶ MB114/A5, 1912, Loose leaf sheets.



III. 6

Men of the mill. Date unknown

Photographer: unknown

*Standing: Thomas.R.Leithead, W.Broadley, H.Packwood, A.Hohnson, J.Capstick,
Sitting: Thomas Millar, G.A.Ellen, W.Simpson, Mr Bardon, G.Templeton, Mr Haigh
senior.*

*One of the few depictions of James Leithead (mill manager), this early photograph
(certainly pre-1900) probably depicts the foremen of the mill. Note: not a single man
in the group lacks a beard.*

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E244

12 female newcomers remained.⁹⁷ These figures also provide us with an insight as to how many more women were employed by management. Company reluctance to admit blame for the frequent departures of workers within the Christchurch factories is emphasised by the fact that the turnover rate sources do not give the reasons as to why these people left; the notes state only that the departures were of no fault of the Company.⁹⁸ The company now provided many jobs which did not require previous skills, and jobs were available throughout most of the year. The jobs were convenient for Kaiapoi residents as they were often situated close to where employees lived.⁹⁹ However, unlike the Christchurch area, which in general had a ready supply of labour, the Kaiapoi district could supply only a limited number and throughout the years the mill was frequently caught by a labour shortage. It is also worth noting that employment opportunities during December dropped off completely. The reason for this is most likely due to the closure of the mill between Christmas and New Year, as all of New Zealand virtually shut down for this period.

A growing chasm in relations between the KWMCo's management and employees was to reach its widest in 1889. Deep depression within the economy saw an increasing anger among the 'working classes' over what was termed 'sweating' practices both within the country and the company. Anti-sweating agitation, along with the establishment of the Tailoresses' Union in Dunedin, had begun in 1888. A year later agitation was to take hold, though certainly not to the same extent, in Christchurch. The 'Sweating System,' as known in London, was defined in an article of the *Otago Daily Times*. The 'Sweating System' was

....one under which sub-contractors undertake to do work in their own houses or small workshops and employ others to do it, they making a profit for themselves by the difference between the contract prices and the wages they pay their assistant.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ MB114/A5, 1912, Loose leaf sheets. Unfortunately, we do not have any figures to provide us with the turnover rate for the Kaiapoi mill.

⁹⁸ See also Chapter Four: Paternalism, Recruitment, and Gendered Labour 1878-1942 for length of service and turnover rates among women within the Christchurch factories, again there are no figures for the Kaiapoi mill.

⁹⁹ J.E.Bartlett, 1987, p. 17.

¹⁰⁰ D.F. Couling, p. 3.

According to D.F.Couling, this was also the 'Sweating System' that the 1890 Sweating Commission in New Zealand was talking about when they stated that it did not exist.¹⁰¹ However, there were differences of opinion as to what 'sweating' actually was. Beatrice Potter defined the system as consisting of:

1. overcrowded or insanitary workshops or living rooms
2. long and irregular hours
3. constantly falling prices and low wages¹⁰²

If this definition is true then it certainly existed within both the KWMMCo and the rest of the colony.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ D.F.Couling, 1973, p. 4.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

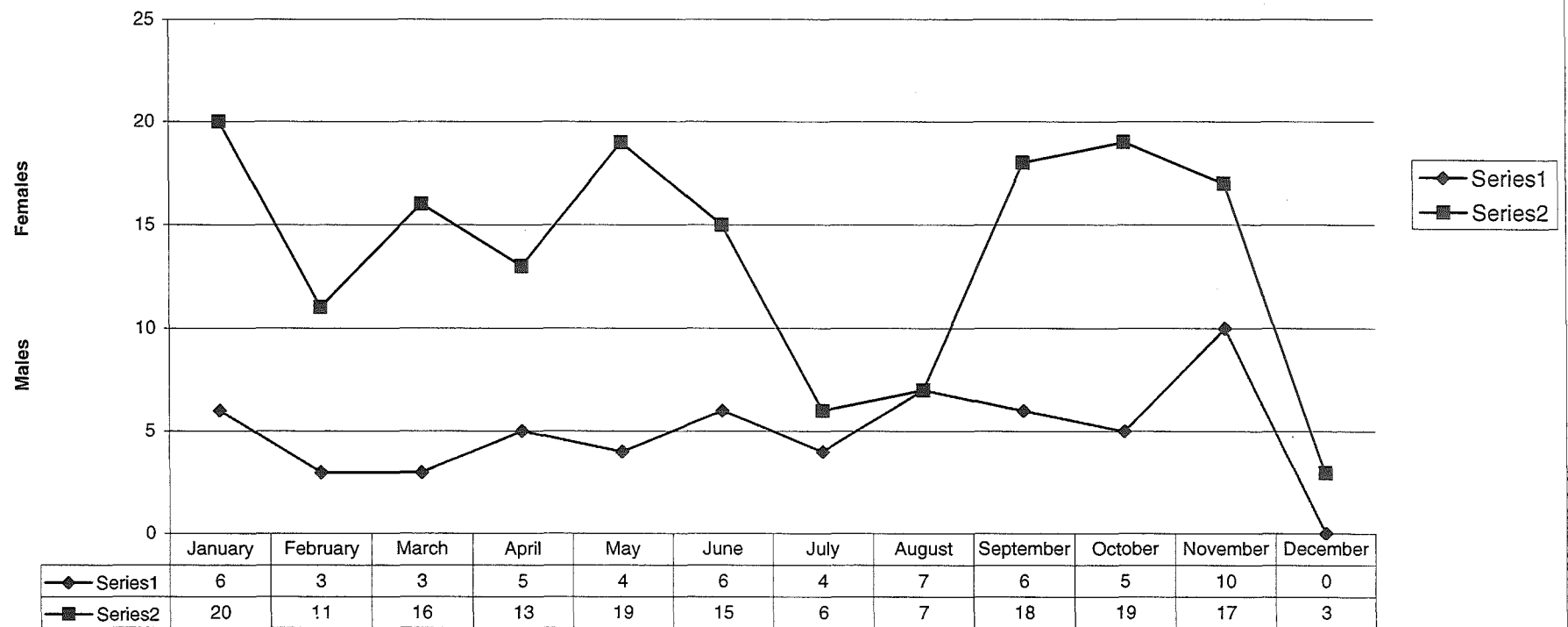


Figure I : Number of New Hands Engaged in the Clothing Factory during 1912

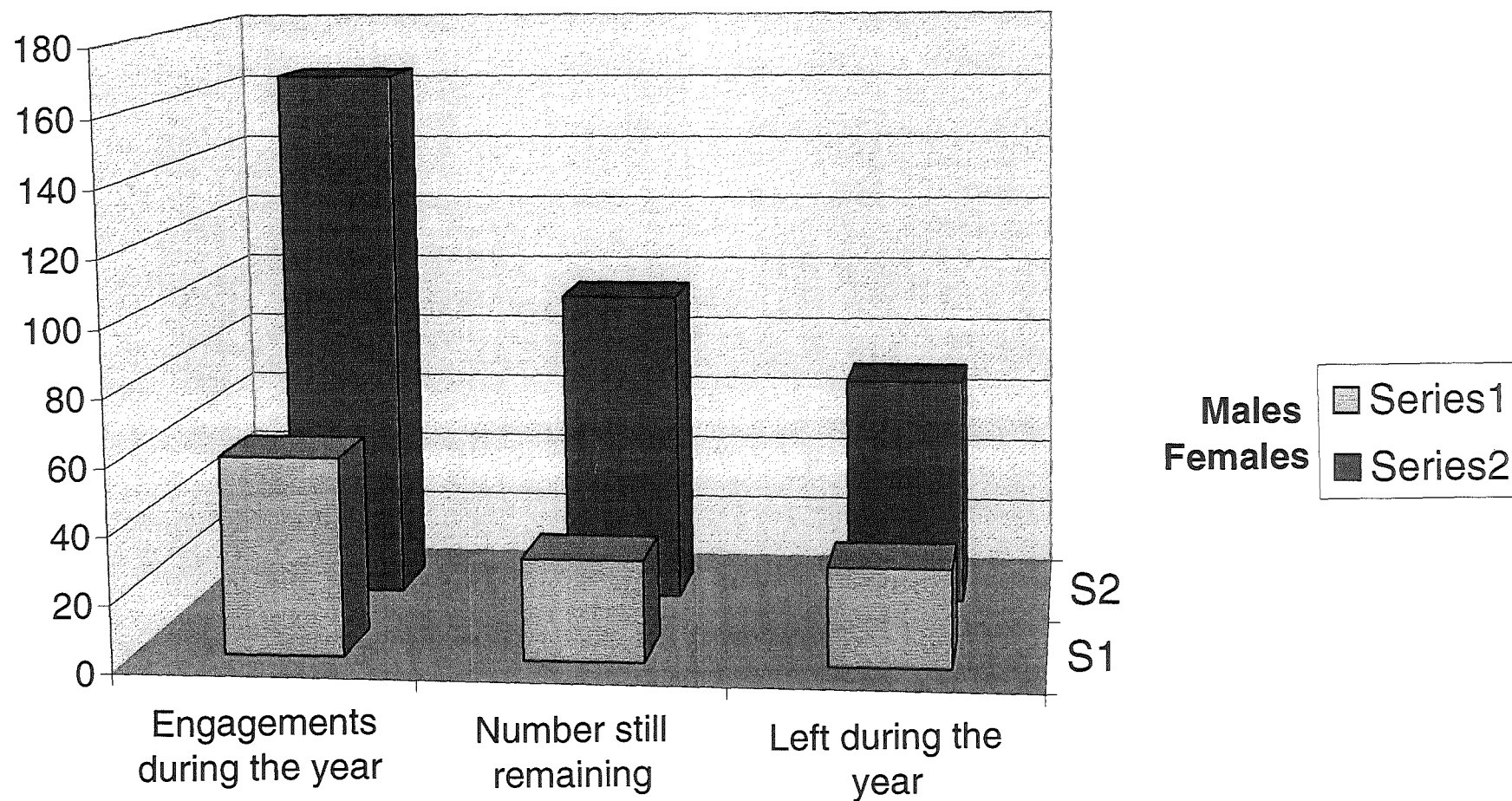


Figure IA: Clothing Factory Employment Figures for 1912

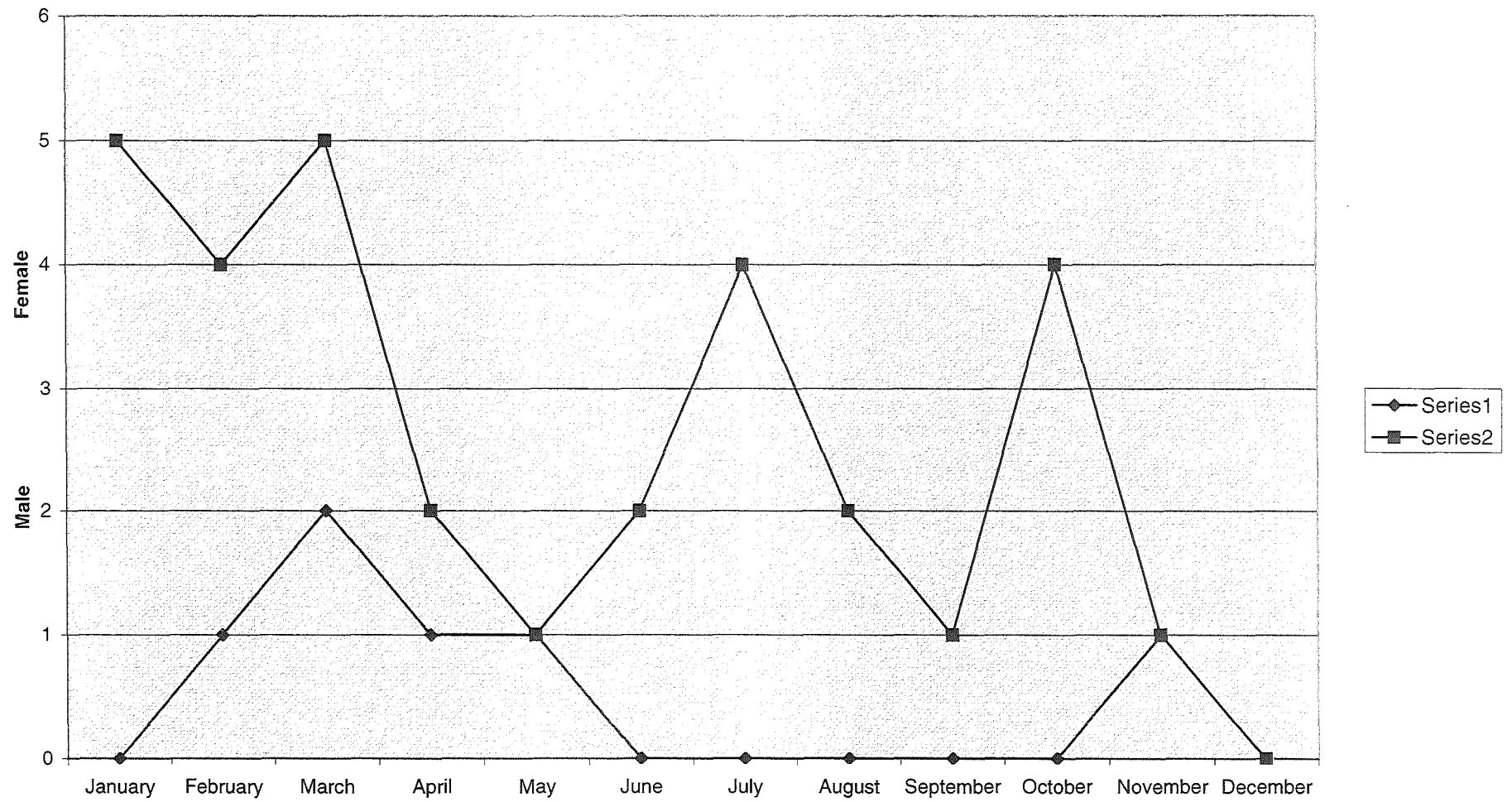


Figure II: Number of New Hands Engaged in the Costume Factory During 1912

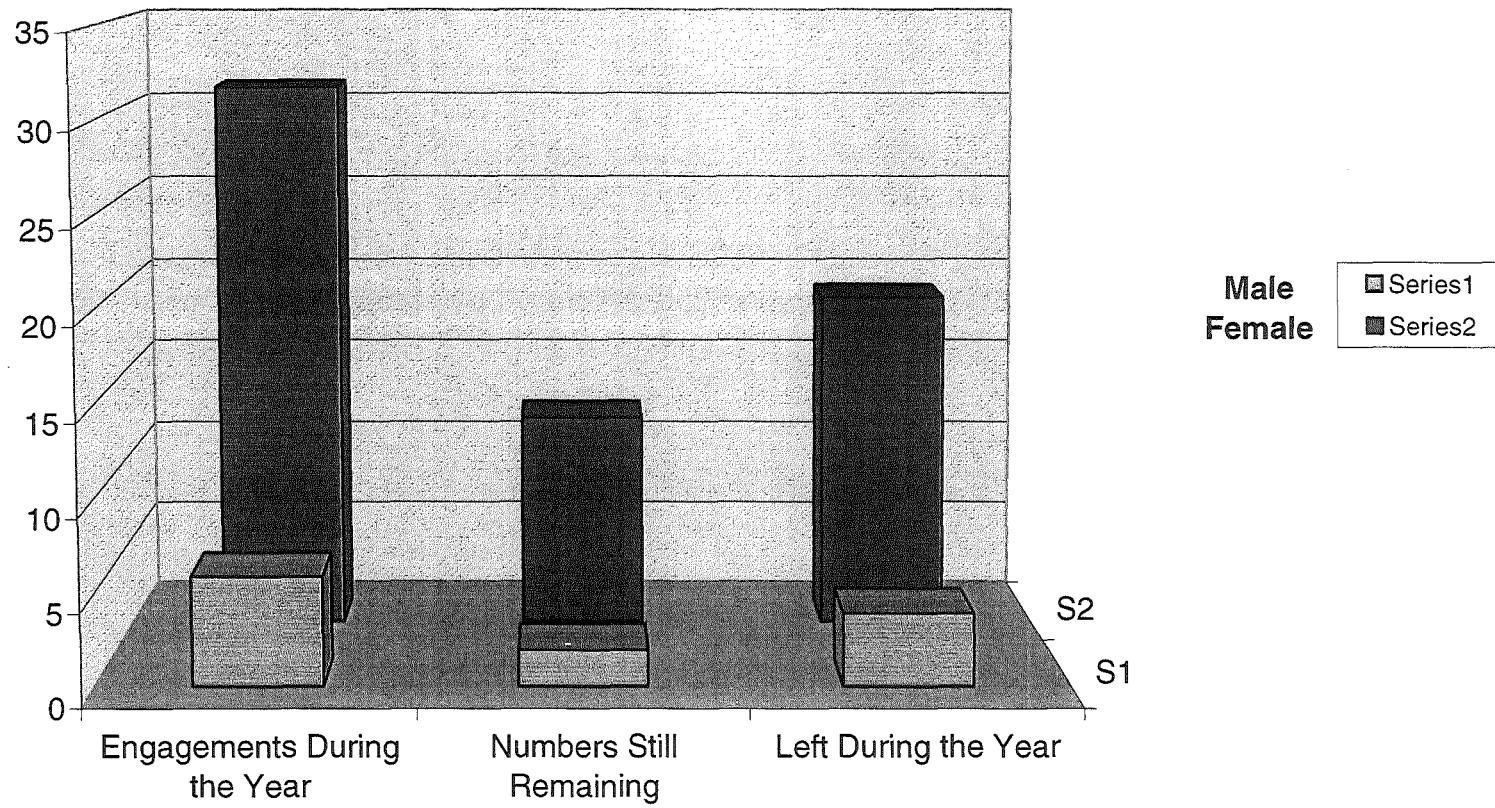


Figure IIA: Costume Factory Employment Figures for 1912

Accused by the Tailors', Tailoresses' and Pressers' Union (established in Christchurch in 1889) of such practices, the KWMMCo was to become embroiled in a dispute that would lead to a strike by its own employees. The new union aimed to put down injustices, particularly in the tailoring trade. Its immediate objectives were sent to Canterbury newspapers and employers emphasising these points:

1. To put down the sweating system
2. To regulate the hours of labour
3. To secure a uniform rate of wages
4. To regulate the per cent of apprentices to the number of workers.
5. To regulate the system of chart orders which some factories had adopted giving their employees simple factory prices for special, and selling the garments at retail prices.
6. To seek to establish the Union, so that none but union hands shall be employed throughout town.¹⁰⁴

Unlike most companies that accepted these points, the KWMMCo directors made it clear that they did not consider that the circular's remarks applied to their business.¹⁰⁵ The union's president, F.S. Parker, found this response very unsatisfactory as the majority of companies did not consider the union's demands unrealistic.¹⁰⁶ Uniform wages and the 'closed shop' aspect of the union's aims, were the two main issues of which the company disapproved. In fact, the factory manager, Pascoe, argued that the rates paid by the company were above the New Zealand (Dunedin) Log. The figures he gave were:

Table 2:

**Comparison between New Zealand Log Rates and those paid by the
KWMMCo¹⁰⁷**

¹⁰⁴ *Lyttleton Times*, 2 October 1889, p. 5. It is worth mentioning, that from this stage on the more right-wing 'Press' gives us very little information about the anti-sweating movement in Christchurch. After a superficial investigation in order to determine whether or not 'sweating' existed in Christchurch it was reported that,

It is satisfactory to be able to state that careful investigation has failed to disclose the existence in this city of any such dens as those described in Dunedin. At the Kaiapoi Factory some work in the shape of Crimean shirts has been given out, but at a fair price, enabling an expert to earn something like £1 to £1.5s per week.

The Press, 23 October, 1888

¹⁰⁵ *Lyttleton Times*, 2 October 1889, p. 5.

¹⁰⁶ K. Clark, 1993, p. 11.

¹⁰⁷ J. Thorn, *Sixty Years of Sacrifice and Struggle* (Wellington, c1936) p.7.

	Log Price	KWMCo
Men's Sacs	1/8	2/6
Men's Vests	11d	1/2
Trousers	7½d	1/-
Overcoats	2/3	3/6

Moreover, the minute books state that average wage rates at the Kaiapoi mill also appear to be higher than the New Zealand Log. The male average being 28/7, and the female 22/9. Weavers earned on average 23/10, burlers 18/2, knitters 18/7, rulers 20/8, and twisters 12/4.¹⁰⁸ These figures, however, were met with derision. The rates given were for first-class work, but when the female employees presented themselves for payment they were, according to union leaders, told that their work was fourth or fifth class, hence they received less in their wages.¹⁰⁹ The KWMCo's refusal to budge resulted in an impasse. In early October they had dismissed a number of hands for belonging to the union. The directors denied union membership was a reason for dismissal, stating it was the result of a decline in trade, but two witnesses came forward claiming the factory manager, Pascoe, had commented on their unionist views. Lizzie Marsden was allegedly informed, by Pascoe, that she would get more work if she changed her opinions, while Alice Luke was sent home by Pascoe to reconsider her union membership.¹¹⁰ On 2 November 1889, the mounting tensions reached a critical point, and with the union's support the workers began a strike.

While the two week industrial action of 1889 resulted in total victory for the union, it also had far reaching significance for the country. A 'closed shop' was established at the Kaiapoi Clothing factory, and the principle of arbitration was affirmed. The major consequence of the anti-sweating agitation in New Zealand was the establishment of the 'Sweating Commission'. Although the commission eventually stated that 'sweating practices' did not exist, three of their own members, R

¹⁰⁸ MB114/A1, p. 185, Meeting of Directors, 21 August 1889.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ K.Clark, 1993, p. 11. See also S. Ell (ed), *The Lives of Pioneer Women in New Zealand*, (Auckland, The Bush Press of Auckland, 1993)

Waddell, D.P. Fisher and C. Allan dissented from the statement. They believed that “the system is already in operation, though only to a limited extent [compared with sweating in Britain].”¹¹¹ Nevertheless, evidence given to the Commission was such that the Department of Labour sought centralised state regulations that would extend to “workplaces however small and trade unions and employer groups however puny, so that in theory at least even the possibility of old world iniquities taking root would be eliminated.”¹¹² However, general antagonism towards reform by long serving members of the Legislative Council meant that the three areas in most need of reform were given little more than lip service. The Factories Act of 1891, meant to replace the inadequate Employment of Females Act, was seriously compromised in order to get it enacted, and it was not until 1894 that any serious loopholes were closed.¹¹³ Even so, the 1892 minute books of the KWMCo show even the limited effects of the earlier Factory Act were the cause of anxiety for the company directors. Of particular concern was the clause prohibiting those under 16 years of age working more than 5 hours a day, which would affect 37 at the mill and 39 in the factory.¹¹⁴ In order to keep up production the extra hours would have to be worked by older persons at a higher rate of pay.

Although the Shop and Shop Assistants Bill of 1892, which was to regulate the working hours and conditions in shops and offices, was passed in an even more mutilated form than the Factory Act, it was not until 1894 (following the sweeping victory of the Liberal Party in 1893) that compulsory state arbitration of industrial disputes was enacted. The basic premise of the Arbitration Act was that the state had a right and a duty to intervene in labour disputes and impose a settlement on the parties when they were unable to resolve their differences by peaceful

¹¹¹ *AJHR*, (1890), H –I, ‘Report of the Sweating Commission,’ H-5, p.iii.

¹¹² J.E. Martin, p. 39.

¹¹³ *Ibid.* The Factories Act of 1894 raised the minimum age at which boys could work to 14. It also provided for the recording of work farmed out by factories, and for the ticketing of garments produced in this way to indicate their sweated origins. The appointment of female inspectors was seen as particularly advantageous for women workers. Male workers also received a mandatory half-holiday.

¹¹⁴ MB114/A2, p. 21, Meeting of Directors, 20 July 1892.

negotiations.¹¹⁵ However, most employers were far from impressed by the idea of forced settlements. Indeed, in 1893 the Chairman of the Board of Directors, G.H. Blackwell, reported that the Employers' Association had held a meeting and passed resolutions protesting against the compulsory clauses of the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill. After consideration it was resolved that the chairman and W.R.Mitchell (also a director) be authorised to proceed to Wellington and give evidence before the Labour Bills Committee on the Conciliation and Arbitration Bill.¹¹⁶ Their arguments were to have little effect. The act was ratified in order to prevent strikes like the one experienced by the KWMCo.

Taxes and Tariffs

Sweating agitation not only drew attention to the miserable working conditions of women and the young in particular, it also created an outcry against the importation of shoddy (that is poor quality and/or mixed materials) which caused depression in the local clothing industries. Even the generally unsympathetic Sweating Commission recommended an increase of customs duties.¹¹⁷ Yet, it was not until 1895 that an alteration was made to the customs tariff. The mild measures of protection that had been granted in 1888 were considerably extended, and the tariff level was raised.¹¹⁸ As a textile product that provided considerable competition to the local woollen trade, raw cotton was now placed under firm protection. However, in 1907, the Chairman of the KWMCo reported that a deputation consisting of representatives from the Kaiapoi, Roslyn and Mosgiel companies, with a large number of Members of the House, had waited on the Minister of Customs to protest against raw cotton being placed on the free list.¹¹⁹ The free list meant those

¹¹⁵ J Holt, *Compulsory Arbitration in New Zealand* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1986), p. 15.

¹¹⁶ MB114/A2, p. 56, Meeting of Directors, 19 July 1893.

¹¹⁷ J.B. Condliffe, *New Zealand in the Making* (London, George Allen and Unwin Limited, 1936 and 1959), p. 179.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

¹¹⁹ MB114/A4, p. 83, Meeting of Directors, 28 August 1907.

importing the product into the country could do so without paying a tariff and therefore offer a cheaper competitive commodity within the local textile market.¹²⁰

Manufacturing in New Zealand had received little protection until the 1880s. According to W.B.Sutch, tariff and excise duties had been mainly for revenue purposes.¹²¹ Indeed, throughout the 1870s and early 1880s the ruling opinion of the colony was in favour of free trade, "which was by this time almost an unchallenged dogma in Great Britain, whence the colonists derived most of their opinions."¹²² The 1880 Royal Commission investigating the demands for a higher tariff was candidly free trade in tone, but the KWMCo fervently argued for an increase in tariff rates. Unlike the older, more firmly established Mosgiel, Roslyn and Kaikorai Woollen Factories, the new Kaiapoi mill employed only 80 hands and had a paid-up capital of £15,000.¹²³ The other companies had capitals ranging from £20,000 to £60,000 and as such were better able to withstand competition from the British market.¹²⁴ Isaac Wilson, then chairman of KWMCo, stated that

although every economy is practised, but a small profit is made, the cause being that they [the company] cannot compete with the British flannels, blankets, and yarns, which in many cases are not made of pure wool.¹²⁵

He was convinced that more duty must be imposed on the imported goods if the factory was to make a profit. However, increases in tariffs were not to occur until 1888, and the company was not always to appreciate the higher levels, especially when they required specialist machinery to be brought into the country. Though an increase in tariff rates meant British finished goods could no longer create such strong competition on the local market, it also meant companies like the KWMCo had to pay more for new technology which was so vital to maintain production, quality and their reputation.

¹²⁰ J. E. Bartlett notes, that from 1880 there was a duty of 15% on all woollen imports. However, in 1888 the tariff was increased to 25% on all goods except blankets which were protected by a 20% tariff.

J.E. Bartlett, 1987., p. 6.

¹²¹ W.B.Sutch, *Colony or Nation* (Sydney, Sydney University Press, 1966), p. 29.

¹²² J.B. Condliffe, 1936., p. 178.

¹²³ *AJHR*, (1880), G – I, 'Colonial Industries Commission (Report of the),' H-22, p. 115.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

Nevertheless, a point of interest concerning taxes and tariffs lies in the ability of companies to approach ministers personally in order to argue points of commercial benefit. While not always successful in their attempts, for raw cotton was eventually placed on the free list, business delegates were provided with a unique opportunity to create closer, more beneficial ties with government. Over the years the KWMCo sent such delegates to the Commissioner of Customs, so that the importation of necessary machinery could enter the country duty free. Such a situation occurred in 1894 when the company sought permission to allow new hosiery equipment to enter free.¹²⁶ The Department's initial response was to decline permission. Blackwell's personal visit to the commissioner in Wellington, however, resulted in an agreement that all duty paid on the hosiery machinery would be refunded.¹²⁷

Taxes were also the object of friendly discussion. In the same year Blackwell reported an interview with the Commissioner of Taxes.¹²⁸ This was in reference to the amount of depreciation allowed in making up returns for income tax. The Commissioner offered to allow a deduction of five per cent on the value of plant only, with no deduction of buildings, but he suggested that (should the company not agree) the whole question be submitted to a judge of the supreme court, in which case each side was to pay its own expenses. After considering the matter it was resolved that the Commissioner's offer of five per cent on the value of plant be accepted.¹²⁹ Court action would have been an expensive business with no guarantee of victory, moreover, such action would have only weakened the existing ties the company was trying to maintain with the government department. It would appear in this case that wisdom was the better part of valour.

Tariffs not only affected the company's local market, but its Australian one too.

¹²⁵ *AJHR*, (1880), G – I, 'Colonial Industries Commission (Report of the),' H-22, p. 23.

¹²⁶ MB114/A2, p. 97, Meeting of Directors, 11 September 1894.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ MB114/A2, p. 85, Meeting of Directors, 30 April 1894.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

Due to increasing tariffs in Australia in the early 1900s, it was decided by the company to continue using an agency rather than establish another branch there. The minute books note that Warren and Strang Company (their agents in Sydney) were to remain until the effect of the tariff can be gauged, at a selling commission of six per cent (compared to the previous five per cent).¹³⁰ The Australian 1902 Customs Tariff Act was the result of the creation of an Australian common market on 1 January 1901. This political federation of six colonies (New Zealand abstaining) was born out of the 1890s depression that had lasted longer in Australia than it had in New Zealand.¹³¹ Previously, separate colonies either had different tariff schedules or, like New South Wales, none at all.¹³² Nonetheless, New Zealand woollen mills like the KWMCo were still supplying Australia, including protected markets like Victoria.¹³³ However, after federation, the colonies began destroying customs barriers inside the continent for the sake of creating a wider market, eventually leading to protection against the world outside by heavy customs duties imposed nationwide.¹³⁴ For the KWMCo this move meant their expansion into the continent was limited. In fact, while the company was always to have an agency acting on its behalf in Australia, it was never to create another branch there again.

As we shall see however, the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company was to expand elsewhere. Thanks to the Arbitration Courts, the company's labour troubles never again reached the crisis point they did in 1889, but tensions between unions and employers were still to remain. The expansion of advertising media and continual improvements in technological innovations were to be of great benefit to an enterprising company whose aim was to maintain quality of product while still producing a profit.

¹³⁰ MB114/A3, p. 109, Meeting of Directors, 8 January 1902.

¹³¹ B. Dyster, *Australia in the International Economy in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge, University of Cambridge, 1990), p. 60.

¹³² Ibid.

¹³³ W.B. Sutch, 1966, p. 29.

¹³⁴ B. Dyster, 1990, p. 60.

Chapter Two: Consolidation in the War and Inter-war Periods

1915-1942

Introduction: Main Themes

While looking at the business history of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company during this period, it is important to note that its ability to survive and consolidate its position within the New Zealand woollen manufacturing industry was predicated on policies set in place at the company's foundation. These policies allowed the company to face periodic shortages of labour, an earthquake, two world wars and a worldwide depression during the 1930s. As noted in the first chapter, one policy practised with much vigour was self-promotion. In this chapter we shall see how the need to meet population demand, and the advent of new technology, both forced and allowed for changes in mass marketing. Nationwide newspaper campaigns, cinema advertising and exhibitions were only some of the marketing schemes embarked upon in order to promote the company's products and reputation.

Technological improvements between 1915-1942 resulted in a great deal of business expansion and consolidation for the company. Improved road transport allowed more of the company's products to reach retailers quickly.

Modernisation of plant, and expansion of premises and product range, was required in order to meet growing competition. As a result the Radley mill was built at Woolston in order not only to relieve the overworked Kaiapoi mill, but to increase their hosiery production. During the late twenties, despite a downturn in the economy and reductions in other areas of their business, the KWMMCo was forced to expand further and built a new worsted plant at the Kaiapoi site.

Expansion continued on an international scale also. By 1924 the company was sending its manufactures all over the world. Company directors who travelled overseas would engage agencies to act on their business's behalf while at the same time noting the methods of production used by their international competitors; any chance of improving output while maintaining quality meant the company remained on the higher rungs of the competitive scale.

With consolidation of the labour process occurring during this period, it is not surprising that labour relations within the company also became more secure. In America, Gordon, Edward and Reich's theory of homogenisation, that is, when production increasingly took the form of commodity production for profit, labour power itself increasingly became a commodity, and growing numbers [of people] sold their labour power in exchange for a wage or salary,¹(xi)

was to reach its pinnacle directly after the First World War and then decline severely after the devastating Depression of the 1930s. For the KWMCo, however, employer control over production was to continue successfully for decades to come. The company used the 'drive' system, that is, the ongoing utilisation of supervisors or foremen, or machine pacing, to 'drive' workers. The problems that were to affect the 'drive system' in the large corporations of the United States were less likely to occur on such a scale here. Indeed, while the turnover rate of company employees, (a direct result of the rigours of the 'drive system') was high in Christchurch, the Kaiapoi mill was not to face such a rate of replacement.² Employer control was further consolidated within the KWMCo by the introduction of an executive committee that maintained regular contact with management and the internal affairs of the company. Labour relations during the First World War were improved by granting war donations to those employees who voluntarily went to the front. Wage bonuses were also given to all company workers during the Great War. At the same time, it would appear there was a decrease in the power of the unions while employer control was strengthened thanks to limitations within the Arbitration Court, which allowed wage bonuses to be paid only within three years of announcing an award. However, in 1918 the Court's role was amended by the introduction of the War Legislation and Statute Law Act which allowed for regular increases in employee wages in order to keep up with the cost of living. The serious troubles wrought all over the country by the Depression caused, for a while, strains in the relationships between management and workers. Decreases in wages and the termination of staff were, only a few of the measures to which the company was forced to resort. It was not until the introduction of the Labour government in 1935 that relief from those measures

¹ D.M.Gordon, R.C.Edwards, and M.Reich, *Labor Market Segmentation* (Lexington, D.C.Heath and Company, 1975), p. xi.

² D.M.Gordon, R.C.Edwards and M.Reich., *Segmented Work, Divided Workers* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982) p. 15.

took place. Yet throughout this troublesome period the KWMMCo was not to feel the effects of strikes or walkouts that many other industries faced. Instead, a concerted effort was made to maintain good labour relations.

The strength of the company's financial position meant it was also able to withstand the introduction of higher income taxes in the mid-thirties. Tax levels were raised in order to fund a series of social schemes enacted to provide basic needs for those on lower or no incomes. When the Labour government introduced the Social Security Act of 1938, new or improved social policies were passed. For the KWMMCo, the raising of tax rates, however, caused much consternation as each year following the election of the Labour Government, tax payments increased. Moreover, the never-ending battle for reduction in tariff rates was to continue. Despite the KWMMCo's policy of personal appeals to ministers and various commissions, the tariff rate for competing imports was not to change.

Technological Innovations and Expansion

Consolidation of the KWMMCo's reputation both nationally and internationally between 1915 and 1942 was achieved not only through innovative marketing schemes, but also because of its drive to maintain quality of product while increasing turnover. A policy of continual modernisation and expansion of both plant and product line also allowed the company to meet stiff competition. Watson argues that between the wars there was a rapid diffusion of new technology.³ Some of these new innovations encouraged mass production vital to the woollen mills industry in particular. The new skills acquired during the First World War, such as lorry-driving, were also of great importance, especially for rapid transport.⁴

While the war did create the impetus for many technological improvements, industries in New Zealand were also to feel the effects of serious shortages caused by a reliance on European technology. In fact, by January 1915, KWMMCo management became concerned as problems arose with the supply of dyes from

³ J. Watson, 'Crisis and Change,' PhD Thesis, (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1984), p 8.

⁴ Ibid.

England.⁵ Only a month later management was having considerable difficulty in procuring knitting machine needles for the half-hose machines.⁶ The main stumbling block was that the needles normally used were German made, and while the war continued, New Zealand's woollen manufacturers were to feel keenly the shortage of half-hose machine needles.⁷ However, it was the supply of dyes that was of most concern to the company. By June the same year supplies of red dye were finally being sent from England, but blue could not be procured.⁸ A shortage of shipping facilities as a consequence of the war had not helped matters.

W.H.Scotter notes that

during the four years of war... overseas shipping through Lyttelton was seriously reduced by war losses, [as well as] by the requisitioning of ships as transports, by the need to concentrate shipping on fewer ports, and finally by the calls made of the steam ship lines to meet the prior needs of the North Atlantic trade to Britain.⁹

With a lack of ships being sent to and from England, fewer supplies were taking longer to reach their destination, resulting in production problems throughout New Zealand.

Modernisation meant for the company directors a policy of continually purchasing up-to-date machinery. New additions to the value of £1120 were required in February 1928 for the clothing factory. These included pressing and padding machines which were, as usual, bought in England.¹⁰ Even in 1931, the business's most difficult financial year, improvements were made in order to preserve the quality of production for which the company was now famous. In fact, within the previous four years of trading, new additions totalling £30,000 had been added to properties and plants owned by the KWMCo.¹¹ New machinery would not just improve quality, but production also, as noted in 1935 when the company purchased two 'Komet' knitting machines at an English cost of £135 each. These faster machines could also make a greater variety of lines for the company including fancy half-hose.¹² With war came pressures of maximum output, so when in 1941 a request was made by the mill manager for a new loose wool

⁵ MB114/A5, p. 178, Meeting of Directors, 26 January 1915.

⁶ MB114/A5, p. 180, Meeting of Directors, 9 February 1915.

⁷ MB114/A5, p. 180, Meeting of Directors, 9 February 1915.

⁸ MB114/A5, p. 199, Meeting of Directors, 5 June 1915.

dyeing machine (pump type capacity 350 lbs) at £745 the directors quickly agreed.¹³ The pressure type of dyeing machine was seen as a considerable advantage, both as a time saver and as a means of obtaining better material penetration.¹⁴

An important form of mechanisation that helped create easier internal transport was the installation of a service lift in the KWMCo's main factory in the central city.¹⁵ As the building was three stories in height (see Illustration IV or Illustration VII) the Otis Lift, installed by Messrs Turnbull and Son for the sum of £700 net, made the transport of finished goods, machinery and people efficient and less time-consuming.¹⁶

One mode of technology that encouraged mass production was electricity. While the Kaiapoi mill had been using electric lighting since 1905, it was still using steam to power its machines. In 1919 it was agreed to install electric current with enough power to drive new machinery specially brought from England in order to increase production.¹⁷ How many motors and the power required by them are detailed in Table 3:

Table 3:

Mill Departments and Number of Motors¹⁸

Departments	Number	
Carding Room	3	50 Horse Powered Motor/s
Spinning Room	2	20 " " " "
Teasing Room	1	40 " " " "
Scouring Room	1	30 " " " "

⁹ W.H. Scotter, *A History of Port Lyttelton* (Christchurch, The Lyttelton Harbour Board, 1968), p. 186.

¹⁰ MB114/A8, p. 188, Meeting of Directors, 10 February 1928.

¹¹ MB114/A9, p. 121, Annual General Meeting, 11 September 1931.

¹² MB114/A10, p. 200, Meeting of Directors, 6 December 1935.

¹³ MB114/A12, p. 159, Meeting of Directors, 17 October 1941.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ MB114/A6, p. 11, Meeting of Directors, 22 August 1916.

¹⁶ MB114/A6, p. 11, Meeting of Directors, 22 August 1916.

¹⁷ MB114/A6, p. 149, Meeting of Directors, 6 January 1919.

¹⁸ Ibid.

A temporary breakdown of the Lake Coleridge power scheme, however, meant the new additions continued to be powered by the company's existing method.

Despite further fact finding missions, like that in 1926 when the mill manager, Thomas R. Leithead, was asked to report on the advisability of using government electricity for power at the mill and how much of a saving could be made, if any, over the present method, the company was to wait years before electric current replaced steam power.¹⁹ It would appear from the minute books that by 1931 the Kaiapoi mill did draw some power from Lake Coleridge.²⁰ However, in April 1941 the company finally effected its own power supply at the mill by installing a turbo generator and boiler which cost nearly £26,000.²¹ It was noted that their night load was barely sufficient to operate the turbine and large boiler, but with the day load, a very big saving would be effected by using their own power supply.²² Indeed, with the introduction of electricity a substantial saving on labour could be made through the simplification of many operations.²³ Single machines could now perform a series of tasks quickly and efficiently while saving the company money.

One technology that saw vast improvement during and following the First World War was the implementation of faster and better road transport. The KWMCo was to benefit greatly from this innovation. As promotion of KWMCo goods on a local and national level was also performed by travellers, the use of modern cars not only allowed them to reach distant locations quickly, but regularly. In February 1915, a Cadillac, complete with spare tyre, was bought for the Canterbury traveller for £550.²⁴ By 1917, a now prosperous company (thanks to increased production caused by the war) had motor cars in all the major regions.

Table 4

¹⁹ MB114/A7, p. 89, Meeting of Directors, 10 May 1922. Thomas Roberts Leithead was born in 1873 in Kendal, Westmorland, England. He came to New Zealand with his father, James Leithead in 1879, and was educated in Kaiapoi. After leaving school he began to work at the local woollen mill, and, once having worked in each department, he decided to travel to England in 1897 in order to gain further insight into the business. On returning to New Zealand at the end of 1899 he was appointed assistant manager of the Kaiapoi Woollen mill and on his father's retirement in 1902, Thomas succeeded to the management. *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, Canterbury Provincial District, Volume 3, p. 329.

²⁰ MB114/A9, p. 103, Meeting of Directors, 26 June 1931.

²¹ MB114/A12, p. 127, Meeting of Directors, 4 April 1941.

²² MB114/A12, p. 127, Meeting of Directors, 4 April 1941.

²³ J. Watson, p. 9.

²⁴ MB114/A5, p. 180, Meeting of Directors, 9 February 1915.

Company Cars and their Value²⁵

District	Make	Ledger Value as at 1 July 1917		
		s	d	
Auckland	Ford	181	15	0
Canterbury	Vauxhall	138	7	6
Canterbury	R.C.H.	98	19	6
Wellington	Rover	358	0	0
Wellington E. Coast	Cadillac	242	7	0
Wellington W. Coast	Cadillac	586	9	0

Furthermore the KWMMCo was always to follow a policy of regular car replacement. This not only meant they were buying up-to-date transport that was less likely to break down and cost money, but the prestige factor in owning such vehicles was invaluable. However, during the Depression, and under the firm control of the then general manager William R. Carey, the company was to follow a policy of buying good quality second-hand cars.²⁶ Such a frugal course of action allowed the money saved to be spent in other areas of the business.

For the KWMMCo an increase, in the availability of trained truck drivers after the First World War proved very beneficial. In 1921 a new truck was bought to replace a Ford motorcar that had been used to make two daily runs between the Kaiapoi and Radley mills.²⁷ However, the new three-ton Leyland truck could make half as many trips and, unsurprisingly, carry a good deal more. With five cab lamps, platform, and all necessary tools, it was considered great value for money at the sum of £1175.²⁸ According to Watson, lorries were a great time-saver.²⁹ They also replaced more labour-intensive forms of transport such as the horse-drawn cart for heavy or distant deliveries.³⁰ Moreover, while on “long hauls, carrying heavy tonnages, the railway maintained its economic edge” it, unlike the truck, was unable to deliver to retail outlets or to the factory.³¹ Indeed, between

²⁵ MB114/A6, p. 71, Meeting of Directors, 27 August 1917.

²⁶ MB114/A10, p. 157, Meeting of Directors, 19 July 1935.

²⁷ MB114/A7, p. 67, Meeting of Directors, 21 December 1921.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ J. Watson, p. 21.

³⁰ J. Watson, p. 13.

³¹ Ibid., p. 17.

them, electric power and the motor-lorry made the location of many industries more flexible. It was now not so important to establish a factory on land handy to a railway line or a canal which could bring in coal and provide bulk transportation for finished products.³²

Such was the strength and security of the KWMLCo that expansion during this period was on a much grander scale than ever before. In 1917 two sections in Woolston came up for sale, and in deciding to buy them the directors stated, "we should not look to Kaiapoi as the only manufacturing centre for the company."³³ However, it should be noted this comment was made only after years of pleading by short-staffed managers at Kaiapoi to move the hosiery department elsewhere. Indeed, as early as 1916, Thomas Leithead had been arguing that the labour intensive hosiery section be moved to Christchurch.³⁴ He pointed out

that one or two men could supervise the business and relieve Kaiapoi entirely of knitting. This would ... obviate the necessity of spending money in extra buildings at Kaiapoi ... [which] would be sufficient for any extension that is likely to take place within the next few years.³⁵

So in 1919, two years after the sections were bought, construction began on a new hosiery mill in Woolston. The completion of the 'Radley' mill was not the only visible sign that the company was doing well financially. In February 1920 the capital of the company was increased to £600,000 by the creation of 300,000 new shares at £1 each.³⁶ Within the same month a Timaru property situated at the corner of Church and Theodosia Streets (half of which was already occupied and rented by the KWMLCo as a factory) was bought by them for £2000. A year later a small Invercargill warehouse was opened.³⁷ Expansion of plant was also necessitated by war demand in 1941. Indeed, plant additions amounted to £26,320 which included the new turbo generator and boiler, and building additions amounted to £4,950 at Kaiapoi and Radley.³⁸

³² J. Watson, p. 17.

³³ MB114/A6, p. 79, Meeting of Directors, 23 October 1917.

³⁴ MB114/A6, p. 11, Meeting of Directors, 22 August 1916.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ MB114/A6, p. 231, Extraordinary Meeting of Shareholders, 13 February 1920.

³⁷ MB114/A7, p. 33, Meeting of Directors, 29 June 1921.

³⁸ MB114/A12, p. 142, Meeting of Directors, 11 July 1941.

Proof of the KWMMCo's consolidation can best be appreciated, however, when looking at its ability to handle harsh financial times. In the three years prior to 1924 the company met losses created by the aftermath of war. A tremendous slump in the value of imported merchandise saw a huge volume of imports brought into the country. In the case of woollen textiles alone this amounted to £1,154,892 while apparel, ready-made clothing, and hosiery also showed huge totals.³⁹ The official figures for these three lines of imports for three comparative four yearly periods are as follows:

1910 to 1913	£6,212,602
1916 to 1919	£7,810,618
1920 to 1923	£15,204,813

The situation resulted for the KWMMCo in a forced reduction in Kaiapoi mill staff. By April 1924, staff had been reduced by 37.⁴⁰ Now left with only 288 employees on its books, compared with 301 in October 1923, the mill was to face even more reductions.⁴¹ By November 1924 the mill had only 273 workers and was about to lose more. Night-shifts had stopped and a section of the weaving shed was closed.⁴² Considerable internal reorganisation had also been effected in the direction of economy and efficiency, and the branch clothing factories at Greymouth and Timaru were closed.⁴³ Nevertheless, while the economic slump and the lack of a skilled workforce in the same period created serious concerns for the company, it was in 1926, thanks to an economic improvement nationwide, that a complete worsted manufacturing plant was installed at the Kaiapoi site.⁴⁴ Financial wherewithal meant the company could also withstand disaster. When in 1931 the KWMMCo lost its warehouse along with two of its staff in the Napier Earthquake, it was able not only to withstand the disastrous financial loss (nearly £16,216), but by 1933 rebuild at a final cost of approximately £5,500.⁴⁵

An exciting rate of international expansion during this period had seen the company establish itself around the world. The method for such expansion

³⁹ MB114/A7, p. 271, Meeting of Directors, 27 August 1924.

⁴⁰ MB114/A7, p. 283, Meeting of Directors, 3 October 1924.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² MB114/A7, p. 19, Meeting of Directors, 19 November 1924.

⁴³ MB114/A7, p.271, Annual General Meeting, 27 August 1924.

⁴⁴ MB114/A8, p. 99, Annual General Meeting, 3 September 1926.

⁴⁵ MB114/A9, p. 70, Meeting of Directors, 6 February 1931, and

appeared to come from personal involvement from managers and directors alike. As the only group of people within the KWMMCo that could regularly afford international holiday travel, they also served to act as company representatives. When Mr Manson (his first name is never mentioned) the Shirt Factory manager, returned from visiting England, America, and Japan in 1916 he had found what he considered to be the best agents available in each country to handle the company's affairs.⁴⁶ The agents were Edwards and Wimmel in London, H.W. Peabody and Company of New York, and Messers Samuel Samuels for Japan (where it was considered absolutely necessary to have a buying shipping agent).⁴⁷ Indeed, by 1924 the company's quality products were being sold worldwide. They had agents in Sydney and Melbourne, representing the company throughout Australia: generally rugs and blankets were sold, mostly in New South Wales and Queensland.⁴⁸ Owing to the large increase in number and size of Australian woollen mills, the KWMMCo's trade was not nearly as large as it had once been as they were handicapped by the protective duty in favour of Australian mills. In Britain, however, Edwards and Wimmel continued to hold stocks of rugs and sold for the company over 200 rugs for 1923 alone.⁴⁹ E.H. Walker and Sons of Vancouver showed company samples in Western Canada, and Th. de Shryver had samples in Eastern Canada. McKenzie and Dussol had KWMMCo samples in New York although, "one was not lead to expect very large business."⁵⁰ James Adam had taken rugs and samples to California and was most hopeful of doing considerable business. Products had been taken by Harrison and Ramsay, Eastern merchants with branches throughout Java. These people were recommended by the Industries and Commerce Department and were apparently in a good position to secure business.⁵¹ The Standard Products Company had samples in Shanghai. In addition, the company had done business occasionally with firms in South Africa and South America and were corresponding with firms in the East Indies.⁵²

MB114/A9, p. 244, Meeting of Directors, 19 May 1933.

⁴⁶ MB114/A5, p. 253, Meeting of Directors, 27 June 1916.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ MB114/A7, p. 285, Meeting of Directors, 17 October 1924.

⁴⁹ MB114/A7, p. 285, Meeting of Directors, 17 October 1924.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ MB114/A7, p. 285, Meeting of Directors, 17 October 1924.

⁵² Ibid.

Keen to capture an extra slice of the market, development of product and business continued on the 'home-front.' Selling 2000 'Lilo' air beds within a twelve month period on behalf of P.B. Low and Company was only one form of expansion.⁵³ Admittedly, this was somewhat removed from the core business of the KWMCo. However, with a proviso made by the directors that all other sources of supply had to be closed and the New Zealand market reserved entirely for the company, the sale of this product served not only as an extra source of revenue, but increased the KWMCo's reputation, which gave it a great advantage over the competition.⁵⁴ Product expansion within clothing lines was a necessary part of business as fickle fashions quickly changed. In 1935, the same year the company agreed to act as agents for 'Lilo' air beds, an agreement was drawn up between them and MacRae Knitting Mills.⁵⁵ The agreement had reference to granting the company licences to make certain protected swimming costumes (including 'Speedo') and also covered future rights for marketing anything that the Australian company may consider worthwhile protecting in New Zealand. As for expansion of business on a local scale, the company's agreement to put £1000 of capital into a much needed freezing works in the district was not altogether altruistic in motive.⁵⁶ In fact, in May 1915 the company authorised J.H.Blackwell (son of George H.Blackwell and now director of the company) to make it known that the Kaiapoi mill would be able to absorb a considerable quantity of female labour.⁵⁷ This action served as an inducement for the works to be established at or near Kaiapoi and gave the company a more ready supply of unskilled female workers. Blackwell acted on the Kaiapoi committee, which canvassed the district for shares in the freezing works venture, and he also acted as deputy chairman upon freezing works establishment.⁵⁸ His involvement with both businesses meant relations between the two industries were always to remain close.

⁵³ MB114/A10, p. 118, Meeting of Directors, 25 January 1935.

⁵⁴ MB114/A10, p. 124, Meeting of Directors, 22 February 1935.

⁵⁵ MB114/A10, p. 152, Meeting of Directors, 5 July 1935.

⁵⁶ MB114/A5, p. 208, Meeting of Directors, 3 August 1915.

⁵⁷ MB114/A5, p. 197, Meeting of Directors, 25 May 1915.

⁵⁸ *The Press*, 15 March 1928, p. 5.

Advertising and Exhibitions

The explosive growth of the popular press as a form of advertising resulted at least partly from mass formal education.⁵⁹ With a more literate population and a lowering in the price of newspapers, thanks to the development of cheaper methods of producing caustic soda and faster presses, more people could afford to experience the regularity of news and events.⁶⁰ The popular press provided an increasing opportunity to reach prospective customers. The KWMMCo made full use of this promotion medium and even expanded into another form of mass publication, magazines. Expensive marketing through exhibitions, however, was seen as a waning investment. Greenhalgh points out that the most significant period for international exhibitions was between 1851 and 1939.⁶¹ By 1939 international exhibitions had become far less frequent or important. Indeed, one of the few successful expositions of this period, the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition 1939-1940, was not attended by the company.⁶² True, the Depression had been felt worldwide and little money could be spent on such ventures, but their importance as modes of identity formation had, by this stage, become outdated. New Zealand's distinctive national and colonial identity had already been successfully displayed before the world, and the way the Dominion represented itself through wool had led to international expansion for the company. Indeed, New Zealand's identification with wool had become securely woven within the Empire.

Any degree of importance that local and national exhibitions once commanded had definitely withered. They had served their purpose as promoters of New Zealand's nationhood. Individuals and companies alike now had faster and more effective forms of publicity. Nevertheless, in the post-first World War period exhibitions were still considered important enough for the KWMMCo to spend vast sums of

⁵⁹ J. Watson, p. 36.

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ P. Greenhalgh, *Ephemeral Vistas: The Expositions Universelles, Great Exhibitions and Worlds Fairs, 1851-1939* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1988), p. 1.

⁶² N.B. Palethorpe, *Official History of the New Zealand Centennial Exhibition, Wellington, 1939-1940* (Wellington, The New Zealand Centennial Exhibition Company Limited, 1940), pp. 109-116. Palethorpe lists those manufacturing industries that exhibited at the event, the KWMMCo is not among them; nor do the company minute books state any intention of attending the Centennial Exhibition. For more information about the Exhibition of 1939-1940 see <http://www.nzhistory.net.nz/Gallery/centennial/intro.htm>

money in order to set up effective displays. One example is the 1924/1925 Dunedin exhibition where the company directors decided to exhibit independently at a cost of around £1200.⁶³ Such expositions, however, were now few and far between. Indeed, aside from a mention in the minute books of the Dunedin exhibition in September 1925, it would appear the company did not again exhibit until the 1931 Canterbury Winter Show, where they spent only £30 to £35.⁶⁴ Indicative of the times, such a paltry sum also serves to demonstrate how much significance the directors now placed upon these occasions. A year later the minute books reveal unease among the board members at having to invest another £20 to display in what was considered a poorly run local winter event.⁶⁵ During times of financial stress, such as those created by the Depression, company leaders were far less willing even to attend expositions let alone spend large sums in making attractive displays. Nonetheless, an improvement in profits for the year 1934 saw the directors prepared to release extra funds for a slightly larger display: willing to part with no more than £100, the general manager, W.R.Carey, however, felt sure they could make do with £50.⁶⁶ One would consider this blasé attitude odd as any opportunity to advertise, especially with the effectiveness that £100 could provide, was vital. No doubt, Carey realised the money was better spent on another form of marketing, preferably that which would find a mass audience.

Compared to local shows, international events still provided an opportunity to display the KWMCo's products to the world. In April 1933, it was decided that the company would promote its goods at the international Hong Kong Exhibition.⁶⁷ Despite their becoming an outmoded form of promotion, large events such as these could not be overlooked as the international market was one in which the KWMCo was always keen to expand. The success of the fair in Hong Kong made such expansion more likely, especially as a lengthy letter had been received from exhibition organisers, intimating that the "fair had been a success and the

⁶³ MB114/A7, p. 269, Meeting of Directors, 22 August 1924.

⁶⁴ MB114/A9, p. 98, Meeting of Directors, 12 June 1931.

⁶⁵ MB114/A9, p. 179, Meeting of Directors, 8 July 1932.

⁶⁶ MB114/A10, p. 80, Meeting of Directors, 13 July 1934.

⁶⁷ MB114/A9, p. 233, Meeting of Directors, 7 April 1933.

company's exhibit had been prominently featured.”⁶⁸ To invest large sums of money (we do not have the figures for this year) on exhibitions, during a period of financial and social strife, was quite a risk; yet it was a risk repeated in 1939. While displaying company goods at the Glasgow Exhibition they presented a rug to Queen Mary.⁶⁹ As noted in chapter one, those events attended by royalty would have gained the attention of the popular press, which in turn served to publicise even more the quality manufactures of the KWMCo.

The initial dislike of newspaper advertising, during the KWMCo's formative years, had long gone by the start of the First World War. Indeed, newspaper campaigns were becoming frequent as management became ‘market savvy.’ Nevertheless, pressures of war and the constant demand for company goods by the military meant public advertising was not a priority. Evidence of this can be seen in the financial statement dated 1 December 1916 to 28 March 1917:

Table 5:

Financial Statement⁷⁰

	£	s	d
War Loan	5000	-	-
Factory Wages	12,041	16	1
Salaries	5349	-	1
Advertising	164	7	3
Mill Wool	72,899	9	3
Wages	8981	2	8
Materials	1649	3	11
Coal	713	11	2
Maintenance and Repairs	381	1	5

Only £164 was spent on advertising for the three month period (and this period included the Christmas sales), making the average for the year nearly £660, yet for the entire year of 1914 over £1000 pounds was spent.⁷¹ Nonetheless, the end of the war and heavy demand from the military saw a concerted effort by management to set aside more for the advertising budget. Indeed, by May 1923,

⁶⁸ MB114/A9, p. 1, Meeting of Directors, 30 June 1933.

⁶⁹ MB114/A12, p. 26, Meeting of Directors, 29 September 1939.

⁷⁰ MB114/A6, p. 41, Meeting of Directors, 2 April 1917.

⁷¹ MB114/A5, p. 141, Meeting of Directors, 10 March 1914.

directors were making a point of keeping the budget around £2000.⁷² The reason for such an increase in expenditure lies in the size of the campaigns which were ordered by the KWMCo to meet continuing competition. The decision to advertise in *New Zealand Truth*, a weekly publication which had the largest circulation in the country, proved to be economical: as the paper charged a comparatively low price, it offered the greatest publicity for the money of any Dominion paper.⁷³

Company directors at this point were also arguing whether to resume advertising in the daily newspapers, especially the metropolitan dailies, which had a wider circulation in the country districts than the local country papers. According to the board of directors the “main idea of the proposed advertising campaign is to keep our name before the public and to influence them to ask for our goods.”⁷⁴ In order to do this effectively it was decided to increase the size of advertisements to 20 inches and to increase the number of metropolitan dailies employed.⁷⁵ Less importance was now placed on provincial newspapers and weeklies.

Less importance was also placed on advertising in general during the early phase of the Depression, although, as indicated in Illustration 7, postcards still proved to be inexpensive and popular. By 1934, yearly advertising campaigns were again underway.⁷⁶ Indeed, the result of that year’s operations yielded a more substantial profit than any of the previous four years. At £70,600, the gross profit showed an improvement of £14,000 over the 1933 financial year, and while depreciation and dividends were still to come off this amount, both shareholders and directors had reason to feel satisfied.⁷⁷ The winter advertising drive of 1936 seems to emphasise the company’s better financial outlook. Deciding to advertise in all the principal newspapers throughout the country, at an estimated cost of £1450, suggests that the directors had extra money to spend in order to attract more business.⁷⁸ During the 1935 winter campaign, the minute books mention the use of an advertising

⁷² MB114/A7, p. 163, Meeting of Directors, 18 May 1923.

⁷³ Ibid.

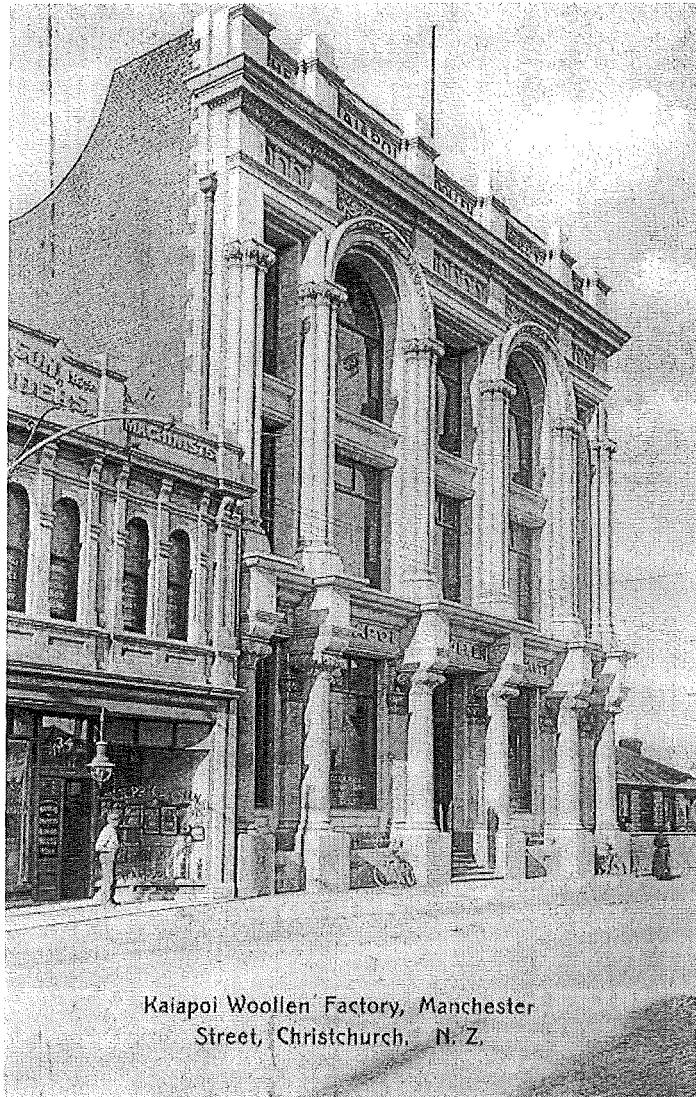
⁷⁴ MB114/A7, p. 163, Meeting of Directors, 18 May 1923.

⁷⁵ MB114/A7, p. 167, Meeting of Directors, 1 June 1923.

⁷⁶ MB114/A10, p. 71, Meeting of Directors, 1 June 1934.

⁷⁷ MB114/A10, p. 93, Annual General Meeting, 7 September 1934.

⁷⁸ MB114/A10, p. 230, Meeting of Directors, 3 April 1936.



Kaiapoi Woollen Factory, Manchester
Street, Christchurch. N. Z.

III. 7

Manchester Street Factory 1930

Photographer: unknown

This postcard of the Manchester Street factory would have been a wonderful advertisement for the Company. Postcards such as these were sent all over the world. Note the bicycle leaning on the building next to the steps; this would have most likely belonged to a visitor, as those workers who cycled to the factory were required to park their bikes in the shed provided at the back.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference NDF/E-Industry

firm, Catts-Patterson, to handle the company's promotional affairs.⁷⁹ Such firms were becoming prominent as more sophisticated methods of marketing were required to meet an increasingly sophisticated reading public. They saved busy companies time and in the long run money, while providing innovative marketing techniques.

Innovative marketing schemes were what the KWMMCo required in order to maintain its standing as one of the top woollen manufacturers in New Zealand. Magazine advertisements became a regular form of promotion. The YMCA requested the KWMMCo's advertisement in their production of *Man* in 1934. At £2 2s per annum it was considered great value for money.⁸⁰ As can be seen in Illustrations 8 and 9 the advertisements were plain and clear in their intention; not only should New Zealanders buy New Zealand made, they should buy the quality Kaiapoi brand. Indeed, the importation of woollen goods manufactured in other countries and even worse, goods manufactured from synthetic fibres, had created deep resentment and concern among New Zealand wool producers and manufacturers alike. The concerns of many were represented in a poem read at the KWMMCo's Annual General Meeting of 1929, which runs:

Mary had a little lamb, its fleece was white
as snow,
And Mary, too, wore woolly things, but
that was years ago,
For Mary now goes gaily garbed in silk
and crepe de chine
And of the lamb is only left the can
they corned him in.
The squatter weeps to find his sheep that
once bore golden fleeces,
Now hardly worth the shearing,
since the market went to pieces,
For Paris plans what women wear
and flannel's lost its pull,
So we must teach the world to shout
our slogan 'Use More Wool!'⁸¹

⁷⁹ MB114/A10, p. 230, Meeting of Directors, 22 March 1935.

⁸⁰ MB114/A10, p. 54, Meeting of Directors, 23 February 1934.

⁸¹ MB114/A8, p. 226, Meeting of Directors, 16 August 1929.

*For your Winter needs
buy*

Kaipoi

WOOLLENS

N.Z. WOOL—N.Z. MADE—N.Z.'s BEST

For the home or for travelling,
for the car or for picnics, a

KAIAPOI RUG

is an indispensable article.
Kaiapoi Rugs are not dear. There's a
quality for every need.

Ill. 8 and 9

The many advertisements placed by the KWMCo within this magazine were to continue with this straightforward, uncomplicated look. They were to remain a standard size, and only the wording changed to suit what was being marketed at the time.

Courtesy of the Alexander Turnbull Library, National Library of New Zealand, Te Puna Mātauranga o Aotearoa (Wellington)

New Zealand Pacific Collection

Reference

S-L 383 'Kaiapoi Woollens Advertisement,' *The Man*, Volume 14, Number 1,
1 March 1934

S-L 384-3 'Kaiapoi Rug Advertisement,' *The Man*, Volume 14, Number 5,
2 July 1934

Such anxiety had been building throughout the 1920s. At the 1926 Annual General Meeting the chairman of directors, J.H.Blackwell (Illustration 10), made clear the frustration felt by manufacturing industries throughout New Zealand.⁸² He addressed the flood of imports into the country, particularly those lines competing with the woollen and clothing industries; indeed, the imports of these lines total, for 1925, £3,680,625, an increase of £335,00 over 1924.⁸³ 1930 also proved to be a year of increased imports, although it would appear from the figures displayed in Table 6 that the Depression was to affect spending for the ensuing three years. The following table shows the imports of materials which compete with the products of New Zealand woollen-mills:

Table 6

Competing Imported Products⁸⁴

Piece-goods	1930	1931	1932	1933
	£	£	£	£
Artificial and pure silk	1,020,019	610,191	677,419	587,207
Woollen	622,256	401,513	425,175	428,982
Cotton and Linen	1,734,653	1,073,157	1,246,024	1,174,092
	=====			
Totals	3,376,928	2,084,861	2,348,618	2,190,281

Another form of self-promotion aimed at the mass market was cinema screen advertising. In March 1931, a proposal was put before the board to feature the company's products in the process of manufacture in cinemas throughout New

⁸² *Lyttleton Times*, 4 September 1926, p. 6. James Henry Blackwell, born 1871, grew up in Kaiapoi. Like his father, G.H.Blackwell, James was a public-spirited man and was a foundation member of the Canterbury Patriotic Fund and of the Canterbury Progress League. He was mayor of Kaiapoi from 1906 to 1911 and from 1915 to 1923. In 1919 Blackwell, was the vice president of the New Zealand Methodist Church and was still chairman of the connexional Probert Trust in 1966. Blackwell was noted for being one of the initiators of the North Canterbury Freezing Company, and was a director of the concern for 40 years and chairman for 25 years. He followed his father's footsteps and became a director of the KWMCo in 1914 and remained until 1929. *Auckland Star*, 27 July 1966, p. 52.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ *AJHR*, (1934-1935), H – I, 'Department of Industries and Commerce,' H-44, p. 26.



III. 10

J.H. Blackwell as Mayor of Kaiapoi in 1923. 1923

Photographer: unknown

His reputation as a businessman and employer within the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited heightened the levels of respect felt for him as a civic leader within the district.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/A129

Zealand.⁸⁵ While their reasons to decline the proposal were interesting in themselves (the members expressed doubt as to whether such films could be considered educational, together with the fact that the period called for the “observance of rigid economy”), a more practical reason was stated by the General Manager, William.R.Carey, who noted that it would probably conflict with the advertising screen rights already granted.⁸⁶ Who the screen rights were with is unknown, however, the proposal does suggest that the modernisation policies followed by the company did not just affect the daily mechanical running of the business, but the promotional aspects as well. In a letter from Amalgamated Theatres in 1935, the board members were offered very favourable rates for screen advertisements in the theatres around the country provided the KWMMCo took space for 30 theatres.⁸⁷ This was on the basis of 5/- per week plus the cost of slides (a total outlay of between £400 and £450 per year including the slides).⁸⁸ In agreeing to accept the offer a conscious decision was made to use this form of new technology in order to reach a mass market.

Given the predominant use of rail travel during this period it seemed maximum marketing potential could be gained by using this as yet another advertising medium. A proposal in 1928 to display posters of KWMMCo goods in railway carriages was considered not only good value for money, especially as they were to be displayed in 300 cars for five years at £385 per annum, but also an excellent way to gain the attention of regular travellers.⁸⁹ The relationship between the company and railway authorities was to continue over the years. In 1932 it was

⁸⁵ MB114/A9, p. 82, Meeting of Directors, 20 March 1931.

⁸⁶ MB114/A9, p. 82, Meeting of Directors, 20 March 1931. William Reynolds Carey was born at Ross, Westland in 1886. After being educated at Christchurch Boys' High School, he found employment with Kirkcaldie and Staines Ltd, Wellington, before going into the drapery business with his father in Christchurch until 1923. Shortly after he was appointed Christchurch manager of Hallensteins Brothers. In 1927 Carey was appointed general manager of the KWMMCo and was for 16 years a director. He also served many years with the Woollen Mill Owners' Association and was for ten years the Dominion president. Carey was also chairman of the United Sawmills Ltd since 1924. He had a keen interest in motoring and began the Pioneer Motor Club, he was also one of the earliest members of the Automobile Association (Canterbury) and had been an executive member since 1922, he was treasurer for many years and was intermittent president between 1930 and 1954. He was also a founding member of the South Island Motor Union. Carey was largely responsible for the formation of the S.I.M.U. Mutual Insurance Association, and was chairman from its inception in 1925. *The Press*, 16 December 1957 and Archives New Zealand (Christchurch), CH 171, Item CH 1485/1957, Probate File.

⁸⁷ MB114/A10, p. 144, Meeting of Directors, 7 June 1935.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ MB114/A8, p. 211, Meeting of Directors, 3 August 1928.

agreed to continue a railway clothing contract which had been granted a few years before.⁹⁰ Considered to be the largest contract that had been called for in New Zealand clothing, it would prove to be financially very useful to the clothing factory given the financial strain the company faced. Indeed, the year had been “exceedingly difficult” thanks to poor trading conditions caused by the Depression which resulted in a loss for the company of £3195.⁹¹ Desperate to keep the contract, the board gave its approval to a lower basis of overhead being charged by the factory when submitting the making price to the Railways Department.⁹² The two industries were to continue maintaining their mutually beneficial relationship. The railway authorities received quality clothing for their employees at a cheap price, and the KWMMCo gained an excellent self-promotion vehicle.

The depiction of conventional images of Maori as a form of self-promotion was a scheme which the KWMMCo had no hesitation in exploiting. The company minutes of May 1929 note that a suggestion was made concerning the advertisement of “company productions by associating them with the native historic interest of Kaiapoi....The general manager was empowered to indulge in publicity of this nature to the extent of £500 per annum for the next two years if thought possible.”⁹³ In fact, the company had been using a reproduction of a Maori chief, thought to be of Atama Paparangi Paetu, on the label sewn onto mill rugs and blankets.⁹⁴ Two portraits of Atama had been completed by Charles Frederick Goldie, *Meditation* and *In Repose*, and it is believed to be one of these two portraits that the company had used. Nonetheless, “Atama sat for these portraits on one condition, that they never be sold.”⁹⁵ That these reproductions were used for commercial reasons proved to be a contentious issue. Unfortunately, while much has been written about the reproduction of Maori portraits, little attention has been given to their use within commercial advertisements. According to Roger Blackley, such reproductions have always

⁹⁰ MB114/A9, p. 164, Meeting of Directors, 13 May 1932.

⁹¹ MB114/A9, p. 194, Meeting of Directors, 16 September 1932.

⁹² MB114/A9, p. 164, Meeting of Directors, 13 May 1932.

⁹³ MB114/A9, p. 254, Meeting of Directors, 31 May 1929.

⁹⁴ KH M, Industry: Woollen Mill: Documents NDF/E, Maori Chief Poster, undated. This sheet was very likely to be used for advertising purposes, it describes Atama Paparangi Paetu and Goldie's repeated attempts at painting him. The document also states that most of Goldie's work was done from photographs.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

been problematic for Maori, in addition to the fact that actual ownership of the paintings was almost exclusively in Pakeha hands.⁹⁶ However, Michael King notes that the twentieth century complicated Maori attitudes to photography by raising the spectre of commercialisation. He goes on to state:

Publication of Maori photographs, particularly in pictorial magazines and postcards, became far more extensive....Maori images were circulated widely within New Zealand and posted overseas as an 'exotic' feature of New Zealand life.⁹⁷

Several categories of Maori pictures acquired especial popularity at this time, one of which was nostalgic depictions of 'old-time' Maori, last in a line of noble warriors and tohungas.⁹⁸ It was this category that the KWMCo management used in its labelling and, it would appear, management continued with the 'native' theme as yet another reproduction of a Maori chief repeatedly found itself on the cover of the company's annual reports. Indeed, annual reports of the early 1960s still show the Maori chief on the cover.

Labour Process and Labour Relations

For Gordon, Edwards, and Reich the 1890s to the 1920s was a period of consolidation of *homogenisation*:

The elimination of earlier precapitalist modes of production, the expansion of the competitive capitalist sector, and the evolution of factory production all pointed toward the homogenisation of labour. The factory system eliminated many skilled crafts, creating large pools of operative jobs; mass production and greater mechanization forged standardized work requirements; larger establishments drew greater numbers of workers into common working environments.⁹⁹

Consolidation helped restore stability to the production process and foster renewed control by the employer over production workers.¹⁰⁰ However, despite most American corporations' successes in weakening the labour movement in the early

⁹⁶ R.Blackley, *Goldie* (Auckland, Auckland Art Gallery Toi o Tamaki, 1997), pp. 48, 49.

⁹⁷ M.King, *Maori: A Photographic and Social History* (Auckland, Reed Books, 1983, 1996), p. 2. For more information about the display of indigenous people in New Zealand either for artistic or commercial reasons see Nick Perry's 'Cinderella and the Silver Mercedes: Popular Culture and the Construction of National Identity' in Perry's *The Dominion of Signs* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1994), pp.15-39, and Bell's *Colonial Constructs: European Images of Maori 1840-1914* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1992).

⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹ D.M.Gordon, R.Edwards and M. Reich, 1975, p.xi.

¹⁰⁰ D.M.Gordon, R.Edwards and M.Reich, 1982, p. 127.

1920s, some problems of the 'drive system' began to appear.¹⁰¹ In particular, the rigours of the 'drive system' and increasingly severe external labour market competition, both joint products of *homogenisation*, resulted in rising labour turnover among production workers (this we have already seen in respect to the KWMCo) and the restriction of effort even by unorganised workers.¹⁰² However, in the United States the major decay of the 'drive system' took place with the Depression.¹⁰³ It would appear that for the KWMCo, corrosion of this system did not take place for at least another two decades, if not later.

As can be seen in Figures I and IA and II and IIA, the labour turnover for the year 1912 was high in the company's city factories.¹⁰⁴ Taking only these figures into account would suggest that the problems of the 'drive system' were emerging here before they developed in the United States. Despite this, the company continued using the system. It would appear its benefits far outweighed the inconvenience of superseding employees who were, while based in the city, easily replaced. It must also be taken into account that the isolated (and therefore always at risk of a labour shortage) Kaiapoi mill would have been unlikely to have such a high turnover rate. Furthermore, evidence of yet another problem within the 'drive system,' that of restriction of effort both by organised and unorganised workers within the company, is lacking. As many women were piece workers paid by rate of product produced, it would not have been financially viable to restrict their efforts unless done so collectively in order to secure a pay rise. This was unlikely to occur, especially during the war years, as collective bargaining powers were crushed, and those trade unions (such as the Tailoresses' and Pressers' Union) that registered under the Arbitration Act were brought under the power of the Arbitration Court.¹⁰⁵

Indeed, the 'drive system' for this period also meant "a continuing expansion of the foreman's role, which added an insistent supervisory impetus to the system of

¹⁰¹ D.M.Gordan, R.Edwards and M.Reich, p. 15.

¹⁰² Ibid.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Chapter One, pp. 49-52.

¹⁰⁵ J. Holt, 1986, Pp. 120-123.

employer control.”¹⁰⁶ As noted in Chapter One, quality and rate of production were maintained by skilled foremen who, in turn, answered to the managers of each department.¹⁰⁷ Before the First World War, these managers were under the direct authority of the General Manager who would ultimately answer to the directorship. During the war, however, an executive committee was created in order to deal with often intensive issues thought too time-consuming for the Board of Directors. An executive committee certainly added to the system of employer control. While they met only bi-weekly the committee members had greater contact with management and the daily running of the business.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, the establishment of such committees meant concentration could be placed upon one particular aspect of the company. However, the 1929 wool committee, set up in order to control all wool purchases, met with resistance from Leithead, who until then had been responsible for all wool buying. In such strong terms did he express his disapproval of the committee that he was forced to resign.¹⁰⁹ Leithead was replaced by George Greenwood in 1930.¹¹⁰ Greenwood’s responsibilities were in many ways equal to those of his predecessor; however, he was not initially given the same title, but was formally called the mill supervisor. While reducing the status of Greenwood, the directors, executive committee and general manager all ensured their own authority was consolidated.

Management scandal and disunion amongst the board were to be publicly avoided at all times. The company’s reputation lay not only with its quality of product, but with the conduct of its management and staff. Nevertheless, scandal almost broke out in December 1917 when it was revealed that the head of the trimmings department was on “too familiar terms with the two female clerks under him.”¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ D.M.Gordon, R.Edwards, M.Reich, 1982, p.128.

¹⁰⁷ Chapter One, pp. 44, 45.

¹⁰⁸ MB114/A6, p. 3, Meeting of Directors, 25 July 1916.

¹⁰⁹ MB114/A8, p. 287, Meeting of Directors, 29 November 1929.

¹¹⁰ MB114/A9, p. 49, Meeting of Directors, 3 October 1930. and *The Press*, 24 May 1991. A *Yorkshireman*, *The Press* states George Greenwood came to New Zealand in 1925 to become manager of the KWMCo’s mill and held the position until he retired in 1959. However, it would appear this initial employment date is incorrect because Leithead was not replaced at the Kaiapoi mill by Greenwood until 1930. Nevertheless, Greenwood had been associated with the textile trade for over five decades and had received his training in Britain and India. He was patron of the Harewood Hockey Club and was a past master of the Kaiapoi Masonic Lodge. He was also a representative of the woollen mill owners on conciliation councils. *The Press*, 24 August 1960, p. 15, and Archives New Zealand (Christchurch), CH 171, Item CH 1037/1960, Probate File.

¹¹¹ MB114/ A6, p. 85, Meeting of Directors, 3 December 1917.

Their services were dispensed with along with the services of the department manager.¹¹² In 1926, following the discovery of “several irregularities” on the part of C.G.Blackwell, George Blackwell’s grandson (who was at the time in charge of the clothing department in Auckland), he dutifully handed in his resignation. In admitting responsibility for the irregularities he also undertook to make restitution.¹¹³ No mention of the police was made and it would appear the issue was ‘swept under the rug.’ Tensions among board members were also kept within the walls of the company. When William Carey, son of the KWMMCo’s board member Andrew Fuller Carey, was finally asked to become general manager in 1927 (after years of operating without one), there was conflict amongst the directors.¹¹⁴ J.H. Blackwell, son of George Henry, and board member since 1914, was not at the meeting of directors when the appointment of the new general manager was made. He did, nevertheless, take strong exception to the conditions and terms under which Carey was hired. At a salary of £1500 per year with two years’ guaranteed engagement and complete control, including that of the mills, Carey now had a great deal of power.¹¹⁵ Blackwell’s unhappiness at the terms may have contributed to his eventual resignation two years later when he referred to the divided opinion on the board, which, he believed, “in the past had been a contributing factor to many of the company’s difficulties.”¹¹⁶ Personal strains in relationships between board members were to continue over the years, but these were kept within the company walls. Any chance of the public, or even worse, the shareholders, finding out could damage the company’s reputation.

The First World War was a prosperous period for the KWMMCo, and was also a time that allowed for better labour relations with its employees. Though under no

¹¹² MB114/A6, p. 85, Meeting of Directors, 3 December 1917.

¹¹³ MB114/A8, p. 76, Meeting of Directors, 23 April 1926.

¹¹⁴ MB114/A8, p. 168, Meeting of Directors, 23 September 1927. Andrew Fuller Carey was born in Wolverhampton, England in 1863. He left for New Zealand in 1882 and spent periods in Dunedin, Oamaru and the West Coast before coming to Christchurch in 1889. Once here he set up a drapery business in partnership with T.E.Toneycliffe. The partnership dissolved in 1907, but Carey maintained the business until 1924. Carey was an active member, and intermittent director and president of the Young Men’s Christian Association for more than fifty years. He was also a member of the Oxford Terrace Baptist Church and president of the New Zealand Baptist Union which he represented at the Baptist world conference in London in 1905. He served on the Christchurch City Council and was a director of the New Zealand Farmers’ Co-operative Association, the United Sawmills Ltd and the KWMMCo. *The Press*, 2 July 1937, p. 14, and Archives New Zealand (Christchurch), CH 171, Item CH 18993/1937, Probate File.

¹¹⁵ MB114/A8, p. 170, Meeting of Directors, 7 October 1927.

moral obligation to do so, the directors decided to provide financial support for many of the male employees called up for military service. Married men were to receive two-thirds wages for six months, and single men one-third wages for six months, though no grant would be made unless the men had been in the company's service for at least two years.¹¹⁷ By 1917, the war contribution to the employees at the front had not only continued, but it was agreed to pay the men for another six months.¹¹⁸ However, in consequence of heavy taxation claims necessitated by the war, the directors felt compelled in 1918 to discontinue all war gratuities.¹¹⁹ Any cases of special hardships for those employees on active service which the Soldiers' Financial Assistance Board were not able to help, could ask the directors to consider the merits of each case and if successful the company would provide monetary support.¹²⁰ Moreover, in granting a supplement of five per cent on wages to all mill employees for the duration of the war, the KWMCo followed the Arbitration Court's policy of providing war bonuses as it was realised that wages had to be adjusted upwards with the cost of living.¹²¹ In this case employers were forced to act voluntarily: the Arbitration Court could not raise minimum wage levels in line with inflation during this period since the majority of awards ran for a minimum of three years, and they had no power to raise wages during the currency of an award.¹²²

As the war ended, however, the government modified the Arbitration Court's role by an amendment in late 1918 to the War Legislation and Statute Law Act. This meant the Court could now amend awards during their currency, and more importantly, could explicitly take into account both conditions affecting industry and increases in the cost of living.¹²³ According to Martin, this was a crucial change that opened the way for a much enlarged role for the Court, and led eventually to the system of general wage orders.¹²⁴ The complexities of dealing

¹¹⁶ MB114/A8, p. 226, Meeting of Directors, 16 August 1929.

¹¹⁷ MB114/A5, p. 221, Meeting of Directors, 2 November 1915.

¹¹⁸ MB114/A6, p. 71, Meeting of Directors, 27 August 1917.

¹¹⁹ MB114/A6, p. 89, Meeting of Directors, 21 January 1918.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ MB114/A5, p. 227, Meeting of Directors, 11 January 1916, and J. Holt, *Compulsory Arbitration in New Zealand* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1986), p. 121.

¹²² J. Holt, p. 122.

¹²³ J.E. Martin, *Holding the Balance* (Christchurch, Canterbury University Press, 1996), p. 155.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

with the cost of living in relation to each award led the Court in April 1919 to fix basic wage rates for unskilled, semi-skilled and skilled workers.¹²⁵ The rates were as follows: skilled, 1s 7½d; semi-skilled, 1s 4½d to 1s 6d; unskilled, 1s 3½d.¹²⁶ To these wages was added a bonus of 2½d to compensate workers for the further increase in the cost of living up to 31 March 1919.¹²⁷ This statement was to constitute the first so-called standard wage pronouncement. There were further such pronouncements in 1920, in response to a continued rise in the cost of living and a shortage of labour, and again in 1925, when the economic conditions of industry were also taken into account.”¹²⁸

The economic conditions of the 1930s weakened labour relations seriously; however, consolidation within the KWMCo was such that it was able to withstand the strain. By February 1931 the Depression had intensified to such a state that the Forbes Government was forced to make a 10 per cent cut in civil service salaries. The Arbitration Act was also amended to give the Court power to review awards ‘in the light of the present economic conditions.’¹²⁹ Weakened unions vying against the Employers’ Federation sought wage increases, or failing that, stabilisation on the 1921 wage pattern. The award handed down on 29 May, however, was that wages be reduced by 10 per cent following the cut in pay of the civil servants.¹³⁰ The following month the general manager was instructed to put into effect the general reduction in salaries in sympathy with the Court’s finding.¹³¹ Moreover, in March that year Kaiapoi mill employees were faced with a cut in hours. The mill (with the exception of the worsted section which was working overtime) was operating only five days a week and work was being regulated in the Allen Street factories.¹³² By September, staff rationing was in place throughout all the company warehouses in the country, but as a result the business made a considerable savings in salaries.¹³³ Indeed, despite the effects of the Depression causing difficulties in the labour relations of the KWMCo,

¹²⁵ J.E.Martin, p. 155.

¹²⁶ *AJHR*, (1921-1922), H – I, ‘Department of Labour,’ H-11, pp. 1-28.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

¹²⁸ J.E. Martin, p.155.

¹²⁹ J. Holt, p. 185.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 186.

¹³¹ MB114/A9, p. 98, Meeting of Directors, 12 June 1931.

¹³² MB114/A9, p. 79, Meeting of Directors, 6 March 1931.

¹³³ MB114/A9, p. 126, Meeting of Directors, 18 September 1931.

measures such as staff rationing or cuts in hours meant it was secure enough to withstand many of the financial problems caused by the economic downturn.

Taxes and Tariffs

Consolidation of the KWMCo meant it was able not only to withstand the devastating effects of the Depression, but also the greatly increased taxes put in place to effect a series of social improvements throughout the country. In order to improve conditions caused by the Depression, the new Labour Government set about a tremendous burst of legislative activity between 1936-1938.¹³⁴ In doing so they transformed New Zealand into a Welfare State. One of the first and most important measures taken was the restoration of the cuts in salaries.¹³⁵ For the KWMCo revival of salaries to the 1931 level caused some consternation.¹³⁶ Indeed, Carey submitted to the Board information that suggested restoration in salaries and wages would cost the company an estimated £1000 per month: this without taking into consideration the new award basis for juniors.¹³⁷ Along with the restoration in cuts, the Arbitration Court was also directed to fix a basic minimum wage for all workers. Legislation continued with a large public works programme that was established to provide employment on full wages instead of 'relief.'¹³⁸ Pensions were increased, and invalid pensions and payments for deserted wives were introduced. A building scheme for state houses began, which were, in turn, let at a low rental.¹³⁹ However, it was not until the implementation of the 1938 Social Security Act that even greater social schemes took place.¹⁴⁰ Pensions were again increased, family allowances were extended, and a national health service was introduced. These services were paid for by a special tax on income.¹⁴¹

Complaints by the directors about the amount of land and income tax paid by the company had been occurring on a regular basis since the First World War. These complaints were to become more frequent following the measures taken by the

¹³⁴ K. Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Auckland, Pelican Books, 1959), p. 270.

¹³⁵ W.B. Sutch, *Takeover New Zealand* (A.H. and A.W. Reed Ltd, Wellington, 1972), p. 34.

¹³⁶ MB114/A10, p. 250, Meeting of Directors, 26 June 1936.

¹³⁷ Ibid.

¹³⁸ K. Sinclair, p.270.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid.

Labour Government to combat the effects of the Depression. According to KWMCo management, it appeared to be an inopportune time to introduce increased tax on industry.¹⁴² Indeed, before the Labour Government had even been elected, the company's profits, production, and working hours had all improved. Furthermore, in early September 1936, Carey reported that

in terms of recent legislation the company's production units were all on forty hours during the present week. There was an abundance of work offering and there was an apparent shortage of skilled operatives in many divisions of the company's business.¹⁴³

It appeared that while industry was improving, a rise in tax rates served only to hinder any progress made. At the Annual General Meeting of 1936, the general grievance was made formal when the directors announced that the current amount of tax (4s 6d in the £) would increase to 7s 6d in the £.¹⁴⁴ By 1937 the company was called upon to pay £10,385 in Land and Income Tax during the year, an amount equivalent to four per cent on the ordinary share capital.¹⁴⁵ When the third reading of the Bill on Social Security Tax was made applicable to companies in 1938 the KWMCo proposed to pay it by deducting the amount of same from dividends.¹⁴⁶ In 1940, the KWMCo had to pay a combined total for Land and Income and Social Security Tax of £31,453 7s 11d.¹⁴⁷ A taxation reserve including Social and National Security of £23,000 0s 0d had been created in 1939, and this was consequently drawn upon as was £8453 7s 11d from the current year's income.¹⁴⁸ With these payments the antecedent liability for tax was met and the company was able to make provision for the 1941 taxation amount from current accounts. This amount (payable in 1942) reached £51,000. While the surplus for the year was very satisfactory, indeed, after providing for depreciation at £20,000 and income tax, there remained a balance of £23,892 5s 4d, the taxation for the year was seen as a "staggering figure and whilst admitting the necessity of

¹⁴¹ K. Sinclair, p. 270.

¹⁴² MB 114/A10, p. 93, Meeting of Directors, 4 September 1936.

¹⁴³ MB 114/A10, p. 93, Meeting of Directors, 4 September 1936.

¹⁴⁴ MB 114/A10, p. 264, Meeting of Directors, 18 September 1936.

¹⁴⁵ MB 114/A11, p. 95, Meeting of Directors, 17 September 1937.

¹⁴⁶ MB 114/A11, p. 157, Meeting of Directors, 16 September 1938.

¹⁴⁷ *The Press*, 20 September 1941, p.10.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

heavy taxation in war time we foresee difficulties and embarrassment in a continuance of such a steep rate if applied for any length of time.”¹⁴⁹

As noted in Chapter One, company management was always willing to seek personal interviews with ministers in order to argue their case over tax or tariff rates. This approach was to continue between 1915 and 1942. In August 1921 the Chairman reported that when in Wellington he had interviewed the Commissioner of Taxes with respect to the demand for a further subscription of £13,780 to the Discharged Soldiers Settlement Loan. As a result of the interview, and the figures submitted to the Commissioner, “nothing further was heard of the demand.”¹⁵⁰ In 1933, however, the general manager reported on a case before the tariff commission. Though the Woollen Mill Owners’ Association fought for an increase in the rate of tariff duty, they were unsuccessful.¹⁵¹ The Owners’ Association (of which the KWMMCo was an active member) was to meet many times with commissioners over various issues concerning the woollen manufacturing industry, but as noted in the next chapter, they were to have little success when it came to tariff matters.

Despite the repeated failure to raise tariff rates, the KWMMCo’s economic strength meant it could endure the measures taken by the government in order to combat the social consequences of the Depression. It could also endure the rift in labour relations throughout the early thirties. By using unpopular cost cutting methods, the business remained intact which meant employees could eventually return to regular hours. Moreover, consolidation of the KWMMCo was enhanced by a policy of using new technology and advertising methods. Not only did this policy mean the company could combat the competition more effectively, but more sophisticated advertising techniques served to improve both its sales and reputation.

¹⁴⁹ *The Press*, 20 September 1941, p.10.

¹⁵⁰ MB114/A7, p. 49, Meeting of Directors, 31 August 1921.

¹⁵¹ MB114/A10, p. 3, 4, Meeting of Directors, 30 June 1933.

Chapter Three: Competition or Co-operation?

1878-1942

Introduction

By 1880 New Zealand had four woollen mills operating in Otago and Canterbury. Twenty years later the country had twice that number. While some operations had closed down during this period, they were soon replaced, with mills springing up in areas like Wellington, Auckland, and even Napier. However, the South Island, with its large sheep farming concerns, was to remain the main base for the bulk of the woollen manufacturing industry. With competition increasing among these often large, profit driven businesses, the likelihood of an alliance between them seemed remote. However, faced with stronger unions and increasing wages (a result of the findings of the 1890 Sweating Commission), pressure was such that manufacturers had little choice but to call for the establishment of an association. The benefits that price regulations brought to the industry lessened any worries about the formation of such an organisation. Moreover, the creation of such a group also allowed for the possibility of professional and united lobbying of government over tariff matters. In 1901 the first Woollen Manufacturing Association was created. The fact that it lasted only two years was indicative of the reality that there were not yet enough dedicated members who were interested in working together for an ultimate goal, that being protection of the industry. Problems in maintaining the subsequent 1906 Woollen Manufacturing Association arose not from a lack of members, but rather abuses of the organisation's objectives (most especially breaches of price regulations). Nonetheless, the organisation was to continue until 1913 when some members, including the KWMCo, left, because of these abuses. This time, however, rather than disbanding the alliance altogether, all eleven mills agreed that such a protective coalition needed to remain, and assented to a change in the organisation's name and a strengthening of the regulations. The New Zealand Woollen Mill Owners' Association became the collective voice of the woollen industry's concerns. While continuing the battle over tariff rates, wage increases and maintaining price regulations, this new

association was also to serve successfully as the industry's 'watchdog' both nationally and internationally.

Disorganised Fronts

While the KWMMCo was to argue keenly for the formation of a New Zealand manufacturing association during the late 1890s, only a few years earlier in 1894 it turned down just such an opportunity. On 30 April of that year correspondence was received from the Wellington Woollen Company inviting a representative of the KWMMCo to attend a meeting to be held "for the purpose of considering the advisability of forming a woollen manufacturers association for the colony."¹ It was resolved, however, that because the Board did not favour the formation of such an association, it even declined to be represented at the meeting.² The reasons for this action have not been explained within the company's minute books, but it would appear the directors had not yet realised the need for unity when fighting against wage increases brought on by more active and certainly stronger unions. Competition felt between the country's woollen mills may have also created a sense of distrust among the company's management and directorship. However, such distrust seems misplaced when in 1889 both the KWMMCo and the Mosgiel Woollen Company Ltd agreed to make a joint offer on the smaller Ashburton mill for an amount no greater than £6,000.³ While this offer was declined (the mill was later bought by the Mosgiel company in the same year) it does indicate that between the more established woollen manufacturing companies at least, local competition could be put aside in order to create a stronger competitive base by capturing a larger slice of the national market.⁴ Although the KWMMCo had, at this stage, little immediate competition aside from perhaps the Ashburton Mill itself, the Mosgiel company was faced with direct rivalry from two other large mills in the Dunedin district. For the two companies this was an important, and for the KWMMCo lost, opportunity, as such expansion represented a chance to monopolise a large wool producing area at the expense of other woollen manufacturers in the country.

¹ MB114/A2, p. 85, Meeting of Directors, 30 April 1894.

² Ibid.

³ MB114/A1, p. 175, Meeting of Directors, 17 April 1889.

⁴ Business Development Centre, *The Social and Economic Impact of the Collapse of Mosgiel Ltd on the Towns of Ashburton and Mosgiel* (Dunedin, University of Otago, 1981), p. 20.

Agreeing to meet with other woollen and clothing manufacturers in 1897 could, for the KWMMCo, be seen as a positive step towards an organised front. A new wage log (scale) proposed by manufacturing employees in December of that year showed that employers would have to pay an extra £700-800 per year.⁵ Woollen companies in Dunedin, Wellington, and Christchurch, disturbed by what they considered to be an excessive amount, agreed to a conference to consider the newly proposed log.⁶ When the conference met twenty days later it was not surprising to find they resolved that the log could not be accepted, suggesting instead that a conference of manufacturers and employees should be held at an early date to discuss and agree upon a new log. Failing that, notice was to be given to the unions that the Auckland log would be adopted on 1 July 1898. At the same time the conference had also formed itself into the New Zealand Clothing Manufacturers Association which was to be registered under the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act.⁷ The new Association's efforts in negotiating with unions proved effective. Only a year after its formation the dispute between the associated unions and the Clothing Manufacturers had been accepted by both sides; it was agreed to continue the current log for six months until its expiry, then the whole matter was to be referred to the Arbitration Court.⁸ However, while the Clothing Manufacturers Association initially proved useful when it came to bargaining with unions as a collective whole, it appeared that they could not completely provide for the individual woollen manufacturers' needs.

By 1901 the KWMMCo had joined their Wellington counterpart in calling for the establishment of a specialised woollen association. They resolved that steps should be taken to form a woollen manufacturers' association which would include **all** the New Zealand mills.⁹ As a consequence of this, a conference of woollen mill proprietors was held at which the Kaiapoi, Mosgiel, Timaru and Wellington companies were represented. While there, the company minutes do

⁵ MB114/A2, p. 222, Meeting of Directors, 9 December 1897.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ MB114/A2, p. 224, Meeting of Directors, 29 December 1897.

⁸ MB114/A3, p. 40, Meeting of Directors, 15 November 1899.

⁹ MB114/A3, p. 87, Meeting of Directors, 22 May 1901.

not give an actual location for the conference, an association was formed which included all the above manufacturers except Wellington, whose representative was not authorised to join.¹⁰ A woollen mills log and conditions of labour had been drawn up and was submitted to the workers' union, and it was also proposed to file the log with the conciliation board.¹¹ However, by 1903 the Association had been "wound up owing to the general lack of interest in it."¹² What appeared to be a promising alliance was not used to its best advantage. Instead of putting up a unified front when fighting for wage awards, it appeared companies in different districts were left to fight their own battles, and as a result wages rates varied in separate areas:

Since September last the mills had been worked under an Arbitration Court award, and, as far as the directors knew, everything was going on smoothly. Their only regret was that the award was confined to Canterbury mills. If the other mills of the colony worked under the same conditions, the directors would have no cause for complaint at all.¹³

Such a disjointed and non-unified approach seemed almost destined to fail.

Organised Fronts

The establishment of the New Zealand Woollen Manufacturers Association in December 1906 heralded an era of unity in the normally competitive industry. The first president was John Ross with two vice presidents, one being George Henry Blackwell of the KWMCo.¹⁴ The objects of the Association were as follows:

1. To secure to its members all the advantages of unanimity of action.
2. To protect the interests of its members in all their dealings with labour organisations and to take joint action in respect to labour legislation.
3. To arrange for the settlement by conference, arbitration, or otherwise, of trade or industrial dispute in which the Association or any of its members may be involved.
4. To take such steps as may from time to time be deemed expedient or necessary to protect the interests of the Association.
5. To fix terms of credit, trade and cash discounts.

¹⁰ MB114/A3, p. 87, Meeting of Directors, 22 May 1901.

¹¹ MB114/A3, p. 89, Meeting of Directors, 19 June 1901.

¹² MB114/A3, p. 171, Annual General Meeting, 28 August 1903.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Alexander Turnbull Library (hereafter ATL), MS-Group-0541, New Zealand Manufacturers Federation, ACC 92-105, Box 36, 'Rules and Regulations of the New Zealand Woollen Manufacturers Association.'

6. To secure a reasonable and fair profit upon all classes of goods manufactured by each or any of its members, and to adopt such methods to secure same as may from time to time be determined.
7. To confer upon all matters affecting the interests of the trade generally, with the object of promoting and encouraging the woollen industry in the Dominion.¹⁵

The formation of this organisation certainly seemed professional, with more woollen companies agreeing to become members of this new Association than its less successful predecessor. Indeed, the minute books of the new alliance note that in December 1906 there were “eight members those being: Onehunga, Hawke’s Bay Mills, Petone Mills, Kaiapoi Mills, South Canterbury Mills, Roslyn Mills and Mosgiel Mills.”¹⁶ At the same meeting they decided on an immediate advance on selling prices:

That from this date, no stick, orders, or repeats shall be booked at a price less than an increase of five per cent on the ‘selling price’ of ready made clothing, seven and a half per cent on all Crimean Shirts and Flannel Unders, and ten per cent on all Tweeds, Hosiery, Rugs, Blankets, Flannels, Yarns, or other produce of the Woollen Mills.[sic]

Protecting their interests by creating minimum prices on commonly produced products was, initially, one policy (along with the ongoing battle against wage increases) practised with much enthusiasm.

The focus on the policy of price control was to take some time to change. Indeed, it was not until 1911 that it was argued that price regulations should be cancelled altogether. In May of that year the KWMMCo received a communication from the secretary of the New Zealand Woollen Manufacturers Association stating that it was proposed to “somewhat remodel the Association by rescinding the minimum prices altogether.”¹⁷ The Association would then be united for defence against labour organisations and for protection to the trade in connection with terms of credit.¹⁸ Part of this reasoning may have resulted from repeated breaches of the regulations by certain member companies. Problems had arisen as early as 1908. In a letter to the manager of the Onehunga Woollen Mills (Auckland) the secretary of the Association, William Scott wrote:

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ ATL, MS-Group-0541, New Zealand Manufacturers Federation, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/1 1906 – 1924, New Zealand Woollen Manufacturers Association, (December 1906), p. 1.

¹⁷ MB114/A5, p. 21, Meeting of Directors, 23 May 1911.

¹⁸ Ibid.

I do not think you are justified in saying that some of the mills appear to be allowed to do just as they wish about prices. If you saw the correspondence in this office and know of the many cases investigated by me you would I'm sure be satisfied the By-Laws are being strictly adhered to by all members.¹⁹(sic)

This was not always to be the case however. In July 1909 the KWMCo voiced a strong complaint when a breach in prices was made by the Bruce Woollen Company along with "two or three other members of the Association." Newly fixed prices were to be kept strictly confidential until 15 July when every member could simultaneously adjust their prices without unfairly disadvantaging the other. However, the Bruce Company had dropped their prices early and, it was argued, could take unfair advantage of the situation.²⁰

As a result of these internal squabbles, member companies either threatened to, or actually did, leave the Association. Nonetheless, the benefits such an alliance offered were found to be too great to disregard. By December 1909, frustrated by the continual breaches and spurred on by the Ross and Glendinning Company's decision to leave, the KWMCo also decided to quit the Woollen Manufacturing Association.²¹ Formal notice of the KWMCo's decision was given in February 1910. It was noted in the company's minute books soon after, that a letter received from the secretary of the Woollen Manufacturers Association had intimated that Messrs Ross and Glendinning (owners of the Roslyn Mill) had begun notice of their withdrawal. The KWMCo's chairman, George Henry Blackwell, explained the reasons for leaving as being "that the minimum prices representations made by this company had been almost entirely ignored and the new bye-laws were not acceptable to us."²² The following matters were also objected to:

the standard of low flannel had been reduced, tweeds prices were left as before, without being raised, and Bruce Flannel and unders had been left as before (by not participating in the rise they were in a better position to sell their goods at a cheaper price).(sic)

¹⁹ Hocken Library (hereafter HL), MS-1042, New Zealand Woollen Manufacturers Association Letter Book 1907 - 1914, Letter to the Manager of the Onehunga Woollen Mills from W.Scott, Secretary of the New Zealand Woollen Manufacturers Association, 22 June 1908, p. 160.

²⁰ Ibid., p. 276.

²¹ ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/1, Special General Meeting, 10 December 1909, p. 62.

²² MB114/A4, p. 220, Special Meeting of Directors, 11 February 1910.

After full consideration it was resolved on the motion of Samuel Manning (director of the company since its establishment) that in consequence of the amended bye-laws issued 10 February 1910 not being acceptable to the company “we are unable to continue our membership with the NZ Woollen Manufacturers Association and notice of retirement be therefore given.” It may well have been in the KWMCo’s favour to withdraw, as if Ross and Glendinning left then they could adjust their figures well below the fixed prices set by the Association. Nevertheless, the bye-laws provided such protection and benefits to the Association’s members that within a year, and contingent on “Ross and Glendinning rejoining the Warehousemen’s Association..., the [KWMCo] agree[d] to again join the [Manufacturers] Association.”²³ At the same time it was resolved to alter the name from the New Zealand Manufacturers’ Association to the New Zealand Woollen Mill Owners’ Association.²⁴

While repeated infringements of the Manufacturers’ Association’s regulations were committed by certain companies it did not lead to a downfall of the organisation; rather it resulted only in a name change and a reinforcement of the previous rules. Part of the strengthening of the regulations consisted of new additions. Indeed, tacked on to part five of the original organisation’s objectives were the points “to fix conditions of sale generally,” while the only new rule was “to embark upon technical and industrial research for the benefit of its members.”²⁵ Despite some conflict within the alliance, the perceived need for an organisation that provided protection for the industry meant the Association was strong enough to withstand dissension among the ranks. The newly titled New Zealand Woollen Mill Owners’ Association provided an invigorating start to a coalition that was to last for decades to come.

It appeared the Woollen Mill Owners’ Association also placed greater emphasis on wage negotiations. In 1920 a conference was held with workers’ delegates representing the New Zealand Woollen Mills’ Employees’ Industrial Union of

²³ MB114/A5, p. 21, Meeting of Directors, 23 May 1911.

²⁴ ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/1, Annual General Meeting, 30 May 1913, p. 118.

Workers. After a lengthy discussion an agreement was arrived at, and a draft copy was signed by the delegates on behalf of the Employees' union and by Messrs Barber, Frostick and Glendining on behalf of the Association.²⁶ The Agreement provided as follows:

That the Award of the Arbitration Court dated the 20th day of June 1920 shall be deemed to be incorporated in this agreement, and shall apply in every particular, subject to the following modifications: In addition to the increases on the Award rates granted by the Agreement dated the 11th day of March 1920 the following further increases are hereby conceded:

To adult male workers	2 and a quarter d per hour
To women over 20 years of age	4/6d per week
To girls and boys	3/- per week ²⁷

A year later it was agreed for the "purpose of making adjustments of wages, apart from any classification which may be laid down by any future Award, there should be four classes of adult male workers, those being:"²⁸

1. Highly Skilled – those who have served an apprenticeship and are capable of taking full charge, Comprising Leading Wool Sorter, Assistant Spinner, Assistant Carder, Box Loom Tuner, Assistant Comber, Assistant Worsted Spinner.
2. Skilled – comprising Warper, Plain Loom Tuner, Hand Loom Pattern Weaver.
3. Semiskilled – Chain Minders.
4. Unskilled – comprising all other workers.²⁹

Some departments requiring skilled workers within the Kaiapoi mill are displayed in Illustrations 11 and 12. The relative rates of wages as compared with class 4 (unskilled) was to be one penny advance for class 3 (semiskilled), two pence for class 2 (skilled), and three pence for class 1 (highly skilled).³⁰ Better relations with employees reduced the risk of industrial action. Such relations were brought about by regular wage negotiations between the unions and the Association.

²⁵ ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 36, 'Rules and Regulations of the New Zealand Woollen Manufacturers Association.

²⁶ ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/1, Minutes of General Meeting, 25 November 1920, p. 238.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/1, Minutes of Meeting, 25 February 1921, p. 243.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.



III. 11

Wool Sorting at the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill. c1933

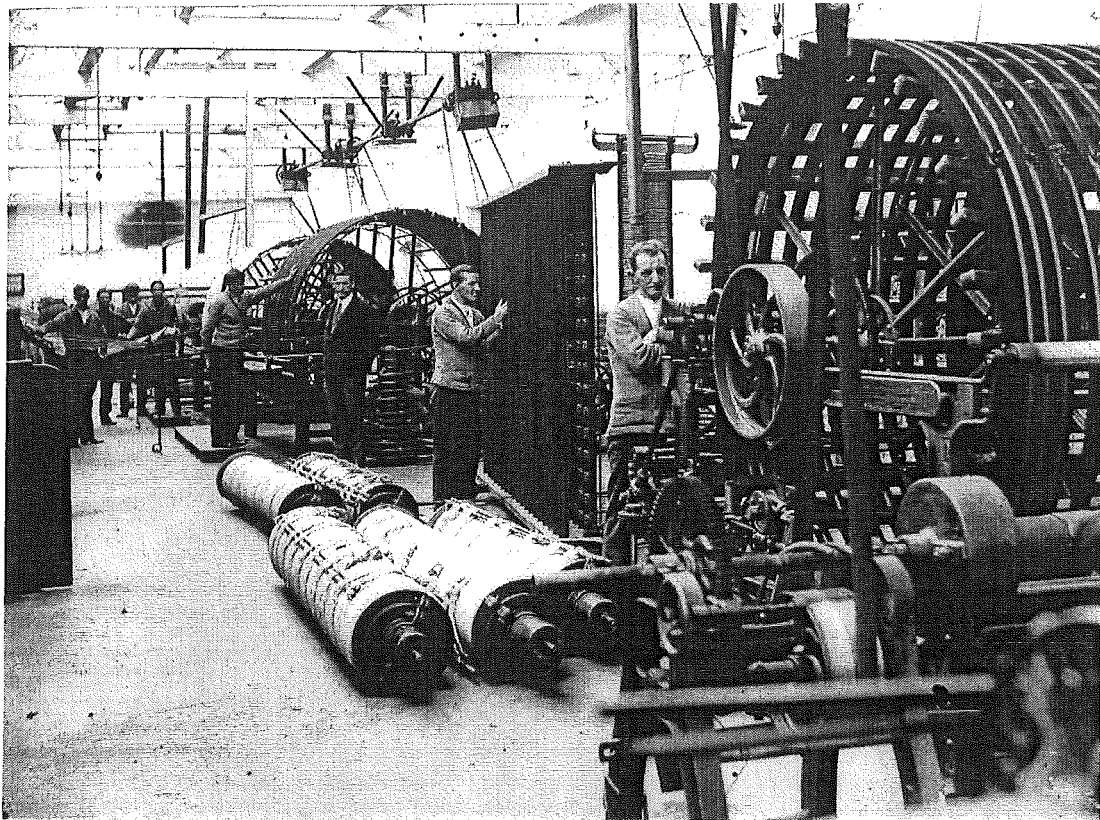
Photographer: unknown

From left to right are: Lee Oram, E. Clothier, H. Robertshaw

L. Inwood, C. Brockelbank

Wool sorting was a skilled position dominated by men. Earning higher wages and escaping the incessant noise of the machines, one could envisage this as a relatively pleasant department to work in, albeit a dusty one.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E142



III. 12

Warping Department at the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill. c1935

Photographer: unknown

From front to back are: C. Harper, Joe Price, W. Hart, L. Brocklebank

M. Lilley, W. Simpson, G. Blackburn, J. O'Connor

Perhaps it was partially due to the size of the machines that the warping department required a perceived level of skilled labour, naturally the department was also male dominated. However, one could imagine that this place was terribly noisy. The Warping Department required men to fasten warp threads to a warp bar at one end and then wind the threads around a warp beam before the weaving process began (see Glossary).

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E119

Like the KWMMCo, the Owners' Association saw an increasing need to promote New Zealand manufactured woollen goods especially during the 1920s and 1930s when overseas textile competition was to reach its peak. Joint advertising campaigns in New Zealand newspapers and cinemas were undertaken in order to promote 'New Zealand Made.' At a Woollen Mill Owners' meeting in 1921 the KWMMCo's chairman James Frostick introduced the subject of joint advertising and noted that a campaign was being prepared on the lines of the Scottish Manufacturers' Association, the object being to educate New Zealand people to buy only the products of their own country.³¹ The scheme was not to interfere with any advertising propositions which individual firms or companies wished to enter.³² A few years later another marketing ploy was used in order to promote the same cause, but this time the Association hired an advertising firm to prepare a draft campaign.³³ In the months following, it was agreed by the KWMMCo's board of directors to pay a pro-rata share of a combined Mill Owners' advertisement in the *Evening Post Industrial*, the total cost of which was £60.³⁴ As noted in chapter two, the use of cinema screen advertising was an innovative way for the KWMMCo to use new technology to reach a mass audience. The Woollen Mill Owners' Association was also happy to use the cinema. In 1942 the Minister of Labour expressed his intention, to members of the organisation, of having a film of the industry prepared for educational purposes.³⁵ (It would appear a film had been produced some years earlier and shown to school children as a part of their curriculum). This later film provided an opportunity not only to educate secondary school children about the woollen manufacturing process and therefore create a continual supply of possible employees, but it also meant the 'New Zealand Made' campaign reached the younger generations.

Tariffs

The Woollen Mill Owners' Association, to a greater degree than its predecessor, was to follow a continual policy of lobbying government over tariff issues. While

³¹ MB114/A7, p. 49, Meeting of Directors, 31 August 1921.

³² Ibid.

³³ ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/2, 1925-1946, New Zealand Woollen Mill Owners' Association, Annual General Meeting, 11 March 1926, p. 3.

³⁴ MB114/A8, Meeting of Directors, 24 September 1926.

the fight over wage logs and maximum prices took up much of the Woollen Manufacturers' Association's time, less importance was given to the battle over tariff rates. Nevertheless, approaches to Government were still made. In January 1907 it was resolved that the

Committee of Management be authorised to approach the Government with a view to providing for the marking of all imported shoddy and unions' goods that come into competition with articles manufactured by the members of the Association. And further to endeavour to secure an increased duty of five per cent on all woollen piece goods and fifteen per cent on military clothing.(sic)³⁶

Such increases would create a tariff rate of twenty-five per cent on the former and forty per cent on the latter. However, while the attempt to raise the tariff rate was unsuccessful, this effort by the organisation was certainly more professional than in 1904 when a deputation of woollen industry representatives gave evidence to the Extension of Commerce Committee. Unfortunately, rather than presenting a united front, the mill representatives who attended together expressed their views independently of each other.³⁷ The Committee's findings were to become a familiar record: "whilst [the Committee] desires to promote the use of New Zealand manufactured goods it cannot recommend an increase in the duty on imported materials."³⁸ Sinclair notes New Zealand's tariff was already one of the lowest in the world.³⁹ As shown in Table 7, by 1935, 48 per cent of the imports came in free.

Table 7

New Zealand Tariff Rates (Percentages)⁴⁰

	1894	1896	1906	1908	1925	1935
Merchandise						
Free	31	32	38	50	45	48
Dutiable	69	68	62	50	55	52
Duty Rate						
On dutiable goods	38	37	33	34	38	34
On all imports	26	25	20	17	17	18

³⁵ ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/2, Minutes of Meeting, 1942, p. 4.

³⁶ ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/1, Minutes of Meeting, 8 January 1907, p. 1.

³⁷ *AJHR* (1904), H-I, 'Woollen Industry of New Zealand,' I-10c, p. 1.

³⁸ *Ibid.*

³⁹ K. Sinclair, *A History of New Zealand* (Auckland, Pelican Books, 1959, Penguin Books, 1991), p. 260.

⁴⁰ J.B. Condliffe, *New Zealand in the Making* (London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1936, George Allen and Unwin, 1959), p. 250.

According to Condcliffe, the highest rate of *ad valorem* duty in the tariff schedule was 60 per cent. The most common *ad valorem* rates were 20 per cent and 25 percent (the tariff rates that were to affect the woollen industry). Only about 6 per cent of the imports by value were liable to duties above 25 per cent while 12 per cent paid less than 20 per cent.⁴¹ As will be shown, the stagnant tariff rate, especially for the woollen industry, caused them a great deal of concern.

The Woollen Mill Owners' Association devoted greater attention to the organised lobbying of government about tariff rates. However, while professional, well-planned arguments were put forward, they were to meet with little success. Just how much a raised tariff rate was needed can be gleaned from a Mill Owners' meeting in 1931:

while the measure of protection afforded to this industry has remained stationary for over twenty years, hours of work have been reduced during that period from forty-eight to forty-five per week, and wages have been increased by over 100 per cent.⁴²

Despite this, tariff levels barely fluctuated. Arising from a meeting of the Association in May 1933, it was proposed to set up a special committee to prepare a case to be presented to the Tariff Commission. A sub-committee was also appointed to act in conjunction with the Clothing Manufacturers also to arrange a joint case to submit to the Commission as "far as the clothing industry was concerned."⁴³ However, such a union was to prove unsuccessful. Unlike the woollen manufacturers, the clothing industry was not concerned with extra duties on low-grade piece goods. A conflict of views resulted, with the Clothing Manufacturers threatening that should the application for specific duties on 'shoddy' and low-grade woollens still be a part of the woollen mills' case, it would be opposed by the Manufacturers at the Christchurch sittings of the Commission.⁴⁴ Naturally such a disunited approach served only to weaken both cases, and again the tariff duty was not altered.

⁴¹ J.B. Condcliffe, p. 250.

⁴² ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/2, Minutes of Meeting, 5 February 1931, p. 6.

⁴³ MB114/A9, p. 241, Meeting of Directors, 5 May 1933.

⁴⁴ ATL, MS-Group-0541, ACC 92-105, Box 37, AH/2, Special General Meeting, 20 September 1933, p. 1.

So important were tariff matters to the Woollen Mill Owners' Association that they agreed to send a representative to the Ottawa Conference in 1932. Sinclair notes the Government had two main aims at the conference: the first was to secure permanent exemption from the new ten per cent British tariff, and the second to gain a tariff preference on the British market over the other Dominions.⁴⁵ At the Conference New Zealand gained continued exemption from the British tariff, and a larger advantage on some produce, including butter, in return for increasing the New Zealand tariff preferences on British manufactures. The plea for a preference over other Dominions, however, was ignored.⁴⁶ This was a problem that caused some apprehension for the Woollen Mill Owners. An announcement made by the chairman at the KWMCo's Annual General Meeting indicated that while the Ottawa Treaty appeared to be a plain, straightforward document requesting the Dominions to adjust their fiscal policies

so as to come within the scope of the agreement, yet we find that Australia can apparently fulfil the terms of the Ottawa Agreement and, at the same time retain textile duties against UK importations averaging from 50 per cent to 80 per cent, while our Dominion Government to comply with Ottawa terms, considers that duties, the highest of which was 27½ per cent, should be reduced.⁴⁷

Reducing the duty even further would have caused not only the woollen industry, but New Zealand manufacturers as a whole cause for considerable anxiety.⁴⁸

Competition for Staff

The New Zealand Woollen Mill Owners' Association brought together and protected, to a certain extent, the industry's manufacturers and mill owners from all around the country. However, it could also punish those belonging to the group who flagrantly flouted the rules by expelling or suspending them from the alliance, so that they risked losing the benefits that came with being a member. Nonetheless, the basic need to produce satisfactory profits meant competition continued; sometimes, when companies attempted to poach each other's staff, this was on an impudent, and certainly an objectionable, scale.

⁴⁵ K. Sinclair, 1959, p. 260. For more information on the Ottawa Conference see M. Bassett, *Coates of Kaipara* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1995).

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ MB114/A10, p. 93, Annual General Meeting, 7 September 1934.

While the KWMMCo's rather unusual relationship with its Wellington counterpart was for the most part civil, it had, at times, resulted in the need for the intervention of the Woollen Mill Owners' Association. Competition between the two companies not only concerned product but staff as well. It was not unusual for specialised (and therefore always in demand) employees to leave one mill to work in another. In 1906 the KWMMCo's warehouse manager Mr Brice had amicably left to take up a position with the Wellington Woollen Company Ltd. So friendly was the departure that the directors presented him with a gold watch for his ten year's service.⁴⁹ In November of that year the Wellington business even suggested the two companies amalgamate, but nothing was to come of the suggestion.⁵⁰ However, the civilities were not to continue. A communication was received in 1913 from the Wellington company complaining that their clothing factory manager had been approached by "our own representation with a view to secure his services for this company. It was decided that a reply be sent stating that the Board did not approve of this being done."⁵¹ Over two decades later, however, the Wellington Woollen Company was to get its own back. At a meeting of directors held in July 1935 the KWMMCo's general manager reported what he regarded as a serious breach of etiquette which had been indulged in by their Wellington counterpart. Without advertising a vacancy in their travelling staff, they had not only interviewed, but apparently engaged the Kaiapoi Company's Wellington traveller, Mr Allpress, "with the idea of placing him on the same territory as he was currently working for this company." The general manager immediately sent the impudent northern business a strongly worded letter, while the board agreed to let him take whatever steps were necessary to safeguard the company's interests.⁵² As a result the KWMMCo complained to the Mill Owners' Association, threatening to withdraw from the organisation due to the "non-observance of Association matters" by the Wellington Woollen Company Ltd.⁵³ Instead of punishments, however, only sympathy was expressed by Association members while it was suggested that as a domestic matter

⁴⁸ MB114/A10, p. 93. Annual General Meeting, 7 September 1934.

⁴⁹ MB114/A4, p. 12, Meeting of Directors, 31 January 1906.

⁵⁰ MB114/A4, p. 45, Meeting of Directors, 21 November 1906.

⁵¹ MB114/A5, p. 124, Meeting of Directors, 25 November 1913.

⁵² MB114/A10, p. 152, Meeting of Directors, 5 July 1935.

resolution of the dispute was better left between the two companies.⁵⁴ Although the Association provided a 'sounding board' for the KWMMCo's grievances, any intervention might only have escalated the problem out of proportion.

The creation of these associations provided the New Zealand woollen industry with a level of protection impossible to achieve on an individual scale.

Professional lobbying over tariff matters both nationally and internationally, the maintenance of price regulations, and negotiations with unions over labour and wage dealings, were all objectives practised by the various alliances. The most successful alliance was the New Zealand Woollen Mill Owners' Association. Its ability to endure, despite competitive factions within the association, was a mark of its importance to the woollen industry. While tariff rates were to remain unchanged, the company benefited from the practice of unified lobbying.

Cooperating with the competition meant the KWMMCo could discuss wage issues with unions as a part of a collective whole, strengthening its position rather than facing possible industrial action alone. Despite abuses, the initial practice of price controls also served to act in the company's favour; price regulation, when it worked, meant no other competing company could sell below the directed price, ensuring no one manufacturer was being disadvantaged by another.

Ironically, the cooperation of the woollen manufacturers in forming alliances was crucial to the KWMMCo's survival in a competitive marketplace.

⁵³ MB114/A10, p. 162, Meeting of Directors, 2 August 1935.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

Section B: A Social History of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company

Chapter Four: Paternalism, Recruitment, and Gendered Labour
*1878 -1942***Introduction**

An important aspect of the KWMMCo's social history from 1878 – 1942 was the continual shortage of labour and the policies adopted to attract and retain employees. Recruitment was aimed primarily at females because they were cheaper to employ, and the work was considered to be more suitable for women as it was monotonous and required manual dexterity. On the other hand, social prejudice against women working in the labour force meant the company had to advertise itself as a caring and moral employer. Local recruitment emphasised the suitability of the work for young women, and, after 1921, the availability of Christian accommodation. Recruiting overseas offered the inducements of paid fares, higher wages and healthier working conditions.

Despite the general social attitude that made women second-class employees, female workers had always been vital in the woollen industry, and the social history of the KWMMCo shows that the Kaiapoi mill was no exception. In fact, so desperate was the need for skilled female workers that company management was frequently sent on recruiting missions overseas. Indeed, the international staffing policy implemented by the KWMMCo also highlights a hidden policy of maintaining a local unskilled labour base in order to keep wages at a minimum. Such a policy was to prove unpopular with the company's resident workers as many of the skilled newcomers were to find out. Nonetheless, in spite of such friction the company remained in constant need of female workers, and throughout this period, especially the 1900s to the 1920s, imported skilled immigrant women from Britain and Australia.¹

¹ Chapter Three's reference to a definition of skilled and unskilled workers was in relation to male, not female, employees within a woollen mill. There is, unfortunately, no clear definition of what is meant by a 'skilled' female worker; it would appear even employers had difficulty in defining one.

As a result of this recruitment policy, the company's social history shows continuing issues of gendered labour and divisions arising within labour. According to Louise Johnson, who quotes Game and Pringle, the sexual division of labour

refers to the allocation of work on the basis of sex, within both the home and the work place, as well as that division between home and workplace which has been characteristic of capitalism. This division of labour operates through a series of dichotomies which, on the one hand, refer to male and female spheres and, on the other, correspond to social divisions that are characteristic of capitalism: public/private, work/non-work, production/consumption. The sexual division of labour then ... is not just something operating at home and work, but is much broader and a basic dynamic in capitalist societies.²

Such divisions were entrenched long before 1878, with men being regarded as the 'breadwinners,' whose role was to support women. Consequently women were consistently accorded lower status and pay, as for example in the 1919 Arbitration Award. Simpson notes that in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, women who were in paid employment were commonly found in tailoring, dressmaking, millinery, textiles and clothing factories, boot and shoe factories, and printing and book binding.³ Woollen manufacturing was also perceived as one of those forms of paid employment that came within the female sphere. Paid work within this industry was considered socially acceptable because textile work was thought to be 'suitable or 'appropriate' for women. The main avenue of employment for women was still, however, domestic service.⁴ The KWMCo, recognising that the supposed role of women's work was 'domesticated,' had aimed what was essentially a recruiting booklet titled *Rooms of Opportunity* (1920)

Experienced and able female weavers were generally considered to be 'skilled' workers. Female employees seen as 'unskilled' were those who were new to the industry and those whose jobs were thought to be even more menial than weaving, such as 'balling.' Any level of skill achieved in departments such as these was to remain unrecognized.

² L.C. Johnson, 'New Patriarchal Economies in the Australian Textile Industry,' *Antipode*, Volume 22, Number 1, (1990), p. 4.

³ C.Simpson, 'The Social History of the Christchurch Young Women's Christian Association 1883-1930,' MA Thesis, (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1984), p. 74.

⁴ Ibid.

towards the mothers and daughters of the Kaiapoi district.⁵ The booklet emphasised that working at the mill prepared a girl for her domesticated future as a mother and wife. It highlighted the fact that mill wages were above the Arbitration Court's awards. Yet no mention was made of the reality that females wages were half that of males. Points were made about the healthful and pleasant working conditions at the mill; however, oral evidence would suggest the Kaiapoi mill had poor working conditions, with many women facing long-term hearing loss due to the incessant noise of the machines. Stress was laid on the 'opportunities' open to females who were willing to work hard. Nonetheless, aside from bonuses which would naturally boost the average wage, women could not climb the company ladder. In fact, no female worker was ever promoted beyond forewoman.⁶

In accordance with both the KWMCo's paternalistic outlook and plain business acumen, the board of directors decided to establish a hostel in 1921 in order to provide immigrant and rural female employees with lodgings. Because the company was continually running short of labour, and there was also a serious lack of local accommodation, the hostel was an added incentive to attract young women to work in Kaiapoi. Managed by the Young Women's Christian Association (from here on the YWCA), the moral and physical care of the girls was to be in accordance with company values. Of less importance was the immediate establishment of a male hostel; men were considered to be more capable of taking care of themselves and, unlike females, did not need the paternal guidance offered by the company.

Immigration

The recruitment of potential immigrants by the KWMCo had been carried out since the company's establishment. The need for, especially, female skilled workers, however, was to increase to such an extent that company managers were frequently sent overseas to personally entice future workers to Kaiapoi. Despite regular groups

⁵ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill: Document: NDF/E, L.S.Fanning, *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service* (1920).

⁶ The company's minute books never mention a woman being promoted into management and none of the interviewees could remember any female achieving management status.

of immigrants agreeing to work for the company, often the inducements offered by the visiting managers were not enough. Those who did emigrate to New Zealand in the hope of seeking better lives for themselves found, as long as they were in debt to the KWMMCo for their fares, that they were bound to work for the company. As a result, the company could retain skilled workers for an extended period.⁷

The company's policy of recruiting skilled workers from outside New Zealand created tension within its local workforce. Immigrants were seen as a possible threat by the local employment force for a number of reasons. One of the most important was the reduced chances for a local skill base to grow. It would seem the KWMMCo had an unspoken policy of keeping the bulk of its New Zealand labour force unskilled, which meant it could pay them cheaper wages. However, by concentrating on an immigrant skill base the company frequently ran the risk of running short of skilled workers, which it often did. According to Eldred-Grigg, unions condemned such private employers for the attack on the wages of workers already in the country.⁸ Such condemnation was ignored by companies, especially those like the KWMMCo, who had a vested interest in bringing over large numbers of immigrants. At the beginning of 1905, twelve female 'hands', engaged by the clothing factory manager while in Sydney, arrived in Christchurch; upon commencing work they found a small demonstration against them by factory staff.⁹ While the minute books note the incident was not of a serious nature (for the management at least) such a welcome would surely have proved uncomfortable for the women. The demonstration served to emphasise the constraints of being bound to the company and the tensions between local unskilled versus immigrant skilled workers.¹⁰

⁷ Chapter Five looks at some immigrant parents and grandparents of interviewees who remained with the company for decades, even recruiting their children to the Kaiapoi mill.

⁸ S.Eldred-Grigg, *New Zealand Working People, 1890-1990* (Palmerston North, Dunmore Press, 1990), p.85.

⁹ MB114/A3, p. 225, Meeting of Directors, 11 January 1905. The incident must have been of a quiet nature since none of the newspapers made any comment of the demonstration.

¹⁰ MB114/A3, p. 225, Meeting of Directors, 11 January 1905.

Such was the recruiting expertise of KWMMCo management that in 1908, when the need for skilled workers was again acute, the clothing factory manager was sent back to Sydney, to gather female workers for his department. This time he returned with twelve coat and five costume hands for the factories.¹¹ Not all new immigrants felt bound by their contracts. Miss Ryan (her first name was not mentioned), a member of the 1905 Sydney group, suddenly left after only two days' work. It is unknown whether her departure was an action planned before leaving Sydney or if the unfriendly welcome by the established employees at the factory had taken its desired effect, but, either way, she left without repaying her passenger fare to the KWMMCo.¹² No mention is made of anyone leaving abruptly after the 1908 group arrived, nor is it recorded if there were any more demonstrations against the newcomers. It is worth noting, however, that the cost-conscious directors, aware that there were enough skilled workers in Australia at the time, would be more willing to pay fares from Sydney rather than pay for the vastly more expensive trip from England. Nevertheless, throughout the period being examined, 'Home' was to remain the most important place of choice for recruiting skilled operatives, especially females. In 1910 an offer was made to pay the fares (the cost of passage to be repaid in weekly instalments) of several girls whose names were supplied by the Misses Tuthill, sisters who had themselves been assisted by the KWMMCo to immigrate to New Zealand.¹³ With many of the immigrants owing fares, the company's power and authority over them was emphasised. This was especially so for the females who were brought over from the 'mother country'. Any girls breaking their contract and refusing to pay the agreed weekly amounts were to be dispensed with.¹⁴ Further consolidation of the KWMMCo's authority was also made possible by immigrants encouraging other immigrants to work out here. This factor ensured a continued cycle of skilled workers emigrating to New Zealand on the promise of a better life while placing themselves in debt to the company.

¹¹ MB114/A4, p. 132, Meeting of Directors, 13 April 1908.

¹² MB114/A4, p. 18, Meeting of Directors, 7 March 1906.

¹³ MB114/A4, p. 258, Meeting of Directors, 25 October 1910

¹⁴ MB114/A5, p. 113, Meeting of Directors, 16 September 1913.

The management found they obtained better recruits themselves than by employing a recruitment agency. Recruits from districts such as Galashiels in Scotland, rich in skilled workers, were frequently approached. In fact business was so regular that in 1911 a British based organisation contacted the company, offering to send out 'appropriate workers.'¹⁵ The minute books note that:

A long and very interesting letter from the President of the British Women's Emigration Association in regard to sending out workers to the Dominion [was received]. It was stated that our London Agent had already been in touch with this Association, and a full reply was being sent giving necessary particulars of our requirements.¹⁶

It would appear, however, the efforts of the Emigration Association were not up to the KWMMCo's standards. In 1912 it was found that the new arrivals sent from England were not suitable, "most of them having only shop experience."¹⁷ As a result management found they were in urgent need of skilled labour. Needless to say, the company soon dispensed with the services of the Association. By 1923 management was being sent to Britain personally in order to recruit skilled workers. In response to an urgent need for mill hands, it was agreed to send Thomas Leithead to select the "requisite number of people and ensure necessary skill level."¹⁸

However, it would appear the wages offered by the KWMMCo were not enough to act as an incentive for everyone. In a cable sent by Leithead he noted that, "forty mill hands sailed on the *S.S. Suffolk* on the 29 November 1923."¹⁹ He also stated that there was little hope of securing hosiery operatives unless £3 per week minimum was guaranteed, and that he had had no success procuring clothing workers.²⁰ This was a definite risk faced by companies that refused to build upon a local skill base and instead depended upon 'Home' for its expert workforce. Potential immigrants did not necessarily find low wages and unknown working conditions, in a country on the other side of the world, an attractive prospect.

¹⁵ MB114/A5, p. 43, Meeting of Directors, 28 November 1911.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ MB114/A5, p. 53, Meeting of Directors, 16 April 1912.

¹⁸ MB114/A7, p. 171, Meeting of Directors, 15 June 1923. Refer to Chapter One which also briefly mentions the recruitment of skilled immigrant workers. p. 43.

¹⁹ MB114/A7, p. 225, Meeting of Directors, 14 December 1923.

Despite the risk, the immigrants of the *S.S. Suffolk* would at least find accommodation upon their arrival in New Zealand. Indeed, James A. Frostick had stated that the women of the *Suffolk* party were to be accommodated at the young women's Kaiapoi hostel (Willowbank), and the single men at 'Ty Coed' (the men's hostel).²¹ Married couples were to be placed in five new homes purposely built by the company in order to house the mill employees. Such accommodation for married couples was made available provided they could "shoulder the financial responsibilities associated with this."²² Moreover, guaranteed lodgings acted as an incentive for potential immigrants.

Employee Accommodation and the YWCA

The establishment of two KWMCo owned hostels during 1921 and 1922 in Kaiapoi initially solved two serious problems that had arisen post-First World War. The first and most obvious was that the hostels provided accommodation for the company's out-of-town and immigrant male and female employees. The second was that the hostels enhanced the company's paternalistic reputation in the district. Hareven, in her study of the North American mill town Amoskeag, notes that the philosophy of paternalism, while aimed at young women, viewed the company as a responsible but strict parent and the workers as obedient and diligent children.²³ In return for minimal pay,

workers were expected to provide their labor and their obedience and loyalty to the corporation. Enlightened management was expected to provide protection and adequate working and living conditions, as well as moral supervision, whether the workers wanted it or not. The relationship between management and workers was thus not strictly defined around an exchange of labor for pay.²⁴

²⁰ MB114/A7, p. 225, Meeting of Directors, 14 December 1923.

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

²³ T. Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 54. See also Joy Parr's, *The Gender of Breadwinners* (Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1990).

²⁴ Ibid.

Close ties between the KWMCo and the YWCA had existed since the early twentieth century. The company had advertised in the YMCA's publication of *Man* on a regular basis and had often generously given donations to both associations, sometimes as high as fifty pounds. In fact, only in times of financial strain, such as in the Depression, did the company reduce or decline the donation amounts. The YWCA, in return, was to establish employment agencies on behalf of both young women seeking work, and employers looking for staff.²⁵ While there is no primary evidence to suggest the KWMCo used the Association's services to gain staff, their relationship was such that the company was to make full use of the organisation's experience in managing hostels for new immigrants. According to Simpson, the YWCA's contribution to the workforce would have been considerably diminished had they not established an extensive network of hostels, making it possible for young rural (and immigrant) women to contribute to the urban labour force.²⁶ Simpson argues that "the establishment of YWCA hostels also saved the Government from the cost and time of providing immigrants with accommodation."²⁷ However, Pickles notes that the government gave an annual subsidy to the YWCA of £500 to help meet ongoing costs such as meeting women immigrants upon their arrival in the dominion, conducting them to hostels, offering advice and assistance, and maintaining regular contact with the new arrivals.²⁸

In the case of the KWMCo, their paternalistic reputation was strengthened due to the fact that it was not the Government, but rather the company which provided potential workers with accommodation. In January 1921, the minute books note that

²⁵ C.Simpson, 'The Social History of the Christchurch Young Women's Christian Association 1883-1930,' (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1984) p. 2.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 7. Unfortunately, the Christchurch YWCA records for this period are lost, however, minute book records, post July 1926, indicate that the Company's Christchurch factories were the subject of special visits organised by and for YWCA members.

²⁷ Ibid.

²⁸ K.Pickles, 'Empire Settlement and Single British Women as New Zealand Domestic Servants,' *The New Zealand Journal of History*, Volume 35, Number 1, April 2001, p. 32. Pickles also mentions (p. 29) that there "were grand plans for establishing small residential hostels as depots for women arriving from overseas, which would also provide permanent homes for a certain number of daily workers." See also J.Malcolm-Black, "'Suitable for New Zealand': the Impact of Interwar Immigration on an Emergent Nationalism," MA Thesis, (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1997), pp. 1-168.

reports had arisen concerning three female workers who had left the mill owing to their being unable to find living accommodation at Kaiapoi.²⁹ Nevertheless, it would appear the accommodation problem was allowed to deteriorate over the year to the extent that the board finally agreed to provide a hostel for its employees. In a report read at the Annual General Meeting of the company in August 1921, the chairman, James Frostick, stated that the object of the hostel's establishment was the social welfare of the men and women employed by the business.³⁰ However, it was not found practical to erect a hostel for the use of both men and women, and consequently the company abandoned the joint accommodation scheme. Even so, the Directors "felt they had a moral obligation to see that at least the women workers were assured comfortable lodgings and companionship of other female workers."³¹ As a result, a large two storeyed building, once the residence of the late George Henry Blackwell, was secured (Illustration 13).³² It was proudly described as a very comfortable home standing in its own grounds of nearly two acres in the best part of Kaiapoi.³³ The house had twelve bedrooms that had beds for twenty-two girls, along with carpeted stairways, a sitting room, easy chairs and lounges; a piano was also provided by the KWMCo.³⁴ Another feature of the furnishings displayed within the hostel was blankets and rugs made at the Kaiapoi mill. An asphalt tennis court was also provided along with other outdoor facilities for "healthy and proper recreation and amusement."³⁵ With only one bathroom and lavatory, however, one could imagine chaos ensuing during the early morning rush to get ready for work. When the question of management arose, the board found they were in need of assistance and so approached the directors of the YWCA. In consenting to run the hostel, the YWCA stipulated that the young women living there were to be subject at all times to the YWCA rules and regulations.³⁶ It was hoped the parents of the girls

²⁹ MB114/A7, p. 11, Meeting of Directors, 26 January 1921.

³⁰ MB114/A7, p. 43, Annual General Meeting, 22 August 1921.

³¹ Ibid.

³² *The Press*, 5 September 1921, p. 2.

³³ MB114/A7, p. 43, Annual General Meeting, 22 August 1921.

³⁴ *The Press*, 5 September 1921, p. 2.

³⁵ MB114/A7, p. 43, Annual General Meeting, 22 August 1921.

³⁶ Ibid.



Ill. 13

'Willowbank' pre 1925

Photographer: unknown

Some also know the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill hostel in Charles Street as 'Willows', however, newspaper reports and company documents cite the building as 'Willowbank'. Full of character, the building once belonged to George Henry Blackwell, but was offered to the company in order to house single female employees living away from home.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E323

who would be living at 'Willowbank' would have every confidence in its management.³⁷

The company-owned hostel certainly ensured a controlled environment guaranteed to keep the young women protected and out of trouble, that is, promiscuity and possible pregnancy, and thus fit for work.³⁸ According to Simpson, women were also less likely to change jobs and move away from the town if they could be provided with pleasant, safe accommodation.³⁹ "The employers were lauded as considerate, generous, and kind-hearted; in the more practical vein, it was also recognised that a happy worker is more productive."⁴⁰ Anxious to act upon an opportunity offered in the context of values which it approved, the YWCA behaved in accordance with company paternalism. They provided discipline, distraction, and entertainment for women workers on behalf of employers who hoped as a result to have a more contented and stable workforce.⁴¹ In this case, the YWCA was accepting of authority of employers over employees."⁴² Daley and Montgomerie comment upon Dalley's view of power relations in New Zealand's past:

Although part of the power equation is to study situations where men oppress women, that is not the sum total of how power operates in our history. We are also interested in exploring how certain women can participate in men's power, have power over other women or use their femininity as a form of power over men.⁴³

Those women who ran various committees in Kaiapoi leading to the hostel's establishment, those women who met immigrants at the station and took them to the hostel, and those YWCA members who ran the hostel, whether knowingly or not acted in a manner that not only participated in men's authority (in this case the company's), but demonstrated how in the power equation, women can have power

³⁷ *The Press*, 5 September 1921, p. 2.

³⁸ C. Simpson, p. 230. For more information on the YWCA and its role see Sandra Coney's, *Standing in the Sunshine* (Auckland, Viking, 1993) and S.Coney's, *Every Girl: a Social History of Women and the YWCA in Auckland, 1885-1985* (Auckland, Auckland YWCA, 1986).

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 231.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ C.Daley and D.Montgomerie (eds), *The Gendered Kiwi* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1999), p. 12.

over other women. Influential women, like the wives of directors and managers, were already in a position of authority over the female employees of the mill.⁴⁴ However, while running committees that had a direct relationship with female newcomers, their authority was cemented by emphasising the subordination of these new workers.

In 1924, after only three years, and in spite of the company's policy of making 'kindly provision' for its female workers' needs, it was decided that 'Willowbank' was no longer viable. In a letter to the KWMCo, the President of the YWCA stated that they had received a letter from the ladies' committee of the Kaiapoi YWCA hostel containing the following:

that this committee express its disappointment that the Kaiapoi hostel, owing to unforeseen circumstances is no longer fulfilling its purpose, and we feel that the present position cannot be satisfactory. As there is no prospect of any increase in the number of boarders, and no further immigrants coming to the mill and while placing on record our warm appreciation of the service rendered by the hostel during its three years in Kaiapoi we have reluctantly come to the conclusion that the need for the hostel has ceased.⁴⁵

As a result, the YWCA decided to offer its withdrawal from the 1921 agreement with the KWMCo.⁴⁶ It was agreed on the motion of James Frostick to relieve the YWCA at the end of the year (1924), while the future of the hostel was deferred.⁴⁷ Within three months, however, it was decided to lease the women's hostel for a period of three years at £3 per week to a Mr and Mrs Debenham.⁴⁸ They and future lease holders were to continue running the home as a place of private accommodation for mill workers for decades to come. Indeed, Irma Dzenis, her husband, and child, used the hostel for a few weeks upon arriving in New Zealand as war refugees from Latvia in 1950.⁴⁹ She did comment that the "rent was too high," but other accommodation in Kaiapoi was difficult to find, and "it was only with the

⁴⁴ Indeed, given the mill's importance to the township, the wives status was such that they had a perceived authority over many women within the town, whether they worked for the company or not.

⁴⁵ MB114/A7, p. 281, Meeting of Directors, 3 October 1924.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ MB114/A7, p. 281, Meeting of Directors, 3 October 1924.

⁴⁸ MB114/A7, p. 293, Meeting of Directors, 5 December 1924.

⁴⁹ Irma Dzenis, Interview, 7 October 2000.

help of George Greenwood [mill manager] that they were finally able to move into a house owned by the company on Beach Road, not far from the mill.”⁵⁰

Accommodation for female workers in 1921 solved one immediate problem while serving the company’s paternalistic aims. However, the need for a hostel catering for men was also perceived as a serious problem. The view that men were less in need of physical and moral care than women meant the women’s hostel took priority. Nonetheless, only a few months after ‘Willowbank’ was opened, plans for a boarding house to accommodate thirty men was drawn up.⁵¹ It was agreed by the board to purchase the property of the late Richard Evans on Fuller Street in Kaiapoi for £1750 pounds, although the building would, unfortunately, require £3000 pounds worth of alterations.⁵² Nevertheless, still keen to move forward with the plans, the directors arranged a Committee to contact the Young Men’s Christian Association and find out under which conditions they would be prepared to take over and manage the hostel for male workers at Kaiapoi.⁵³ Named ‘Ty Coed,’ it appears that the YMCA ran the hostel for two years before things started to go wrong. The minute books of February 1924 note that the chairman had reported that matters at the men’s hostel were far from satisfactory, for unspecified reasons, and that several of the boarders had left.⁵⁴ After a lengthy discussion it was agreed that the boarders remaining would be given notice to leave and the hostel closed. At the same meeting it was decided to sell the property, the price not to be less than £1500 pounds.⁵⁵ The agents selling the men’s hostel were Messers Pyne Gould Guinness Ltd.⁵⁶ However, thanks to a fire that completely destroyed the building in October of that year and left only the out-buildings standing, they did not, unsurprisingly, achieve the price hoped for by the KWMCo, who finally accepted £500.⁵⁷ While company accommodation was provided for couples with the establishment of mill

⁵⁰ Irma Dzenis, Interview, 7 October 2000.

⁵¹ MB114/A7, p. 77, Meeting of Directors, 21 February 1922.

⁵² Ibid.

⁵³ MB114/A7, p. 81, Meeting of Directors, 15 March 1922.

⁵⁴ MB114/A7, p. 235, Meeting of Directors, 29 February 1924.

⁵⁵ MB114/A7, p. 235, Meeting of Directors, 29 February 1924.

⁵⁶ MB114/A7, p. 279, Meeting of Directors, 19 September 1924.

⁵⁷ MB114/A7, p. 289, Meeting of Directors, 7 November 1924.

houses over the years, no further separate accommodation was provided for male workers.

The Depression Era and the Gendered Division of Labour

For the KWMCo and, indeed, the entire country, the effects of the Depression raised questions about 'breadwinning' and the value of women's work. As a result of the gendered segmentation of the labour market, the role of male 'breadwinning,' especially throughout this period, was given a status of importance not accorded to the value of female work participation.⁵⁸ Olssen points out that this segmentation has been explained in various ways, with most explanations invoking either class (employers) or patriarchy (men).⁵⁹ Employers rarely objected to hiring cheap labour, yet the KWMCo was bound up with the community's views about which work was women's and which men's. Women, according to Olssen, did not compete for men's jobs.⁶⁰ The prevailing and influential ideology of private and public spheres held some influence over women's occupations. Notions of women's place often dictated that females were allowed to work only in occupations deemed relevant to their sex. Woollen manufacturing was such an occupation.

The Depression, according to Tim Frank, focused public attention on the breadwinner, and the unexamined expectation that breadwinners were, or should be, male.⁶¹ Evidence of this attitude is described by former employees of the KWMCo such as Ivan Monk. However, the Depression forced many New Zealand families to consider alternatives and supplements to sole male breadwinning, especially with regard to women and youth seeking work.⁶² Frank argues that, although paid work

⁵⁸ A male 'breadwinner' was the provider of a family wage. A family wage was considered to be that which supported a wife and children in decency and comfort. E.Olssen, *Building the New World: Work, Politics and Society in Caversham, 1880s – 1920s* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1995), p. 83.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 77.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ T.Frank, 'Bread Queues and Breadwinners: Gender in the 1930s,' in C.Daley and D.Montgomerie (eds), p. 113. See also Louise Tilly and Joan Scott, *Women, Work and Family* (New York, Methuen, revised edition 1987, Hold, Rinehart and Winston, 1978), and Alice Kessler-Harris, *Out to Work: a Wage Earning Woman in the United States* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1982).

⁶² Ibid.

and breadwinning ideology were gender-biased in the 1930s, economic necessity forced both women and men to adjust their attitudes to gendered employment, and to their workforce participation.⁶³ Both the Depression and the Labour government's policies contributed to the adjustments. Adopting less rigid attitudes about gendered employment, and assuming more relaxed expectations of male workers, was just two of many individual and household responses to the calamitous circumstances.⁶⁴ So,

the Depression offered an opportunity for some to relax their views on women's paid work and to seriously contemplate some adjustments in women's economic position.... At best, women comprised the lowest tier of a breadwinner hierarchy favouring men, and family men most of all. At worst, women in paid work accentuated male unemployment by taking men's jobs, lowering the status and remuneration rates of some jobs and jeopardising the nation's health by fatiguing themselves in the workforce.⁶⁵

Frank also notes, however, that the government gave scant regard to the extent or value of women's paid work during this period.⁶⁶ Such an attitude was exemplified by government attitudes to female unemployment.⁶⁷ Indeed, according to Tennant and Flintoff, the Depression of the 1930s was widely perceived as a male experience.⁶⁸ Women's unemployment was a matter of lesser consequence since their paid work during this period was seen as temporary, supplementing an existing family (male) income.⁶⁹ According to Ivan Monk, an employee of the KWMCo who worked in the Kaiapoi mill for over 57 years, "the Depression wasn't so much of a problem for them [women] since they had husbands, fathers and brothers to support them."⁷⁰ The 1930 Unemployment Act and its later amendments gave legislative support to the supposition that men had a prior claim to "whatever employment was available, with the exception of domestic work."⁷¹ Moreover, there was no provision made for women to register as unemployed. Females were

⁶³ T. Frank, 'Bread Queues and Breadwinners, in C. Daley and D. Montgomerie (eds), p. 114.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Ibid., p. 119.

⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 120.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ M. Tennant and K. Flintoff, 'Women's Unemployment Committees 1931-1939,' in A. Else (ed), *Women Together* (Wellington, Daphne Brasell Associates Press, 1993), p. 138.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ I. Monk, Interview, 30 January 2001.

⁷¹ M. Tennant and K. Flintoff, 'Women's Unemployment Committees 1931-1939,' in A. Else (ed), p. 138.

also excluded from unemployment relief despite being required, from 1931, to pay an unemployment tax on their earnings.⁷² Indeed, by 1931 the only avenues open to unemployed women without family support were hospital board charitable aid and private charity.⁷³ In response to increasing pressure, Women's Unemployment Committees were formed in the same year.⁷⁴ These committees, made up of members of the YWCA, National Council of Women and the Society for the Protection of Women and Children, established registers of unemployed women in the four main centres, "initially to gauge the extent of the problem, but later directing women to employment."⁷⁵ By 1933 there were fourteen committees. A high proportion of those assisted by the committees were young women under the age of twenty, the largest category being girls engaged only in 'domestic duties' where soon complaints arose about exploitative conditions and the expectation of work without wages.⁷⁶ Despite increasing female unemployment levels, with the Auckland women's unemployed register in 1932 having 1500 women signed up, and even this being estimated to be well below the actual level, the government still refused to recognise that female unemployment was a serious problem.⁷⁷

Long before the Depression, however, the government and the Arbitration Court entrenched the gendered division of labour by formalising the distinction between men's and women's work.⁷⁸ As can be shown within the KWMCo, it systematised the advantages of men over women in paid work by endorsing a segmented labour market which accorded 'women's work' lower status and pay.⁷⁹ Evidence of this attitude can be seen in 1919 when a new arbitration award increased the pay rates of adult female workers to 10d per hour, still half that of a skilled male worker on

⁷² M. Tennant and K. Flintoff, in A. Else (ed), p. 138.

⁷³ If interested in charitable aid during this period see M. Tennant's *Paupers and Providers: Charitable Aid in New Zealand* (Wellington, Allen and Unwin, Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1989)

⁷⁴ M. Tennant and K. Flintoff, in A. Else (ed), p. 138.

⁷⁵ M. Tennant and K. Flintoff, in A. Else (ed), p. 139.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁷⁸ P. Mein-Smith, 'Capital and Labour: Resisting Globalisation,' in D. Denoon, P. Mein-Smith and M. Wyndham, *A History of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2000) p. 243.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

nearly 1/8 per hour.⁸⁰ Indeed, Irma Dzenis stated that while working at the mill (she was there for over 21 years) “the wages were unfair to women, they did the same job as men, but not the same pay,” and that was over thirty years after the 1919 arbitration award.⁸¹ Despite this inequality, the company found it had to increase rates of pay for its female workers in the Radley mill in order to ensure they maintained that labour force and enticed new women workers into particular sections of the mill. In fact, in 1923 the company found it had to increase the wages of the women who were employed in the toe joining section, “which was work they had difficulty in getting girls to settle to.”⁸²

Table 8: **Radley Mill Pay Rates for the Toe Joining Section 1923**⁸³

First Year	20/-	per week
Second “	25/-	“ “
Third “	30/-	“ “
Fourth “	35/-	“ “
Fifth “	42/6	“ “

While it is unlikely that working in sections like toe joining was physically heavy work, it was, nonetheless, demanding and monotonous work to perform, hence the need to keep the wages above the Arbitration Court Award. By comparison Table 9 shows the rates for totally inexperienced female workers starting at over the age of 16 years.

Table 9

Radley Mill Wages for Inexperienced Female Workers 1923⁸⁴

16 to 17 years	22/6	per week
18 to 19 “	25/-	“ “
20 to 21 “	27/6	“ “
Over 21 “	30/	“ “

⁸⁰ KHM, Files, Correspondence and Papers 1919-1920, 78/223, The New Zealand Woollen Mill Owners' Association (Minutes of) 8 April 1919.

⁸¹ Irma Dzenis, Interview, 7 October 2000.

⁸² MB114/A7, p. 155, Meeting of Directors, 30 April 1923.

⁸³ Ibid.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

By taking note of the ages and wages received by the newcomers it would appear that financial inequalities continued to exist. Indeed, inexperienced 18 to 19 year olds received the same pay as a second year toe joiner. Given that a second year worker could be considered skilled, such an action seems odd. Unfairness in regard to the wages received by the skilled female workers appeared to have continued beyond a second year skill level. Indeed, third year workers received the same pay as an inexperienced 21 year old at 30 shillings per week. However, some clarification is possible when we take into account piece-work rates. It would appear that a skilled worker could take home a greater wage by 'producing more work.' According to the directors

this [the above amounts are] of course... paid to girls who are entirely new to the work, and they are increased as they show proficiency. On the piece-work rates in the toe seaming a good girl should do from 150 to 180 dozen per week, for which we pay 4d per dozen, this making a girls wages £2 10s 0d to £3 per week. An extraordinary good girl should do better than this, they have had girls who have done well over 200 dozen per week. On the half hose knitting machines our best girl at the present time is earning from £2 15s0d to £3 per week, and our best girl on the big knitting frames is earning about the same money.⁸⁵

Producing more work, as skilled workers would have done, meant they were also more likely to receive bonuses. Irma Dzenis noted that while she "started spinning first for a short while" at the mill "weaving earned more bonuses, but it all depended on how hard you worked, [the] hourly pay the same but [you] could get [a] bonus if you worked harder."⁸⁶

The ethos of 'hard work' pervaded all aspects of mill life, however, "commonly, women were restricted to work deemed 'fit' for them, often repetitive, light and unskilled."⁸⁷ Furthermore, the labour market was vertically segregated into men's and women's jobs, and a narrow range of feminine jobs.⁸⁸ Table 10 shows that in 1919 the Kaiapoi mill had women working in only six sections:

⁸⁵ MB114/A7, p. 155, Meeting of Directors, 30 April 1923.

⁸⁶ I. Dzenis, Interview, 7 October 2000.

⁸⁷ P. Mein-Smith, 'Capital and Labour: Resisting Globalisation,' in D.Denoon, P.Mein-Smith and M.Wyndham, p. 243.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

Table 10

Kaiapoi Plant Full Staffed (Females) 1919⁸⁹

Weavers	65
Winders	15
Twisters	4
Reelers	4
Burlers	18
Whippers	2
==	
Total	108

While women could become skilled in particular departments, certain positions such as weaving allowed greater numbers of unskilled workers to be employed there while saving the company money in wages. Table 11 indicates that little had changed when it came to working positions nine years later, though there were more female workers.

Table 11

Employees at Kaiapoi Mill 31 March 1928⁹⁰

	Male	Female	Total
Engineering Department	11		11
Carpenter	1		1
Painter	1		1
Wool Department	11		11
Dyeing “	5		5
Carding “	20		20
Spinning “	26		26
Worsted “	12	14	26
Twisting “	3	6	9
Warping “	8		8
Winding “	1	13	14
Weaving “	18	61	79
Burling “	3	29	32
Milling “	9		9

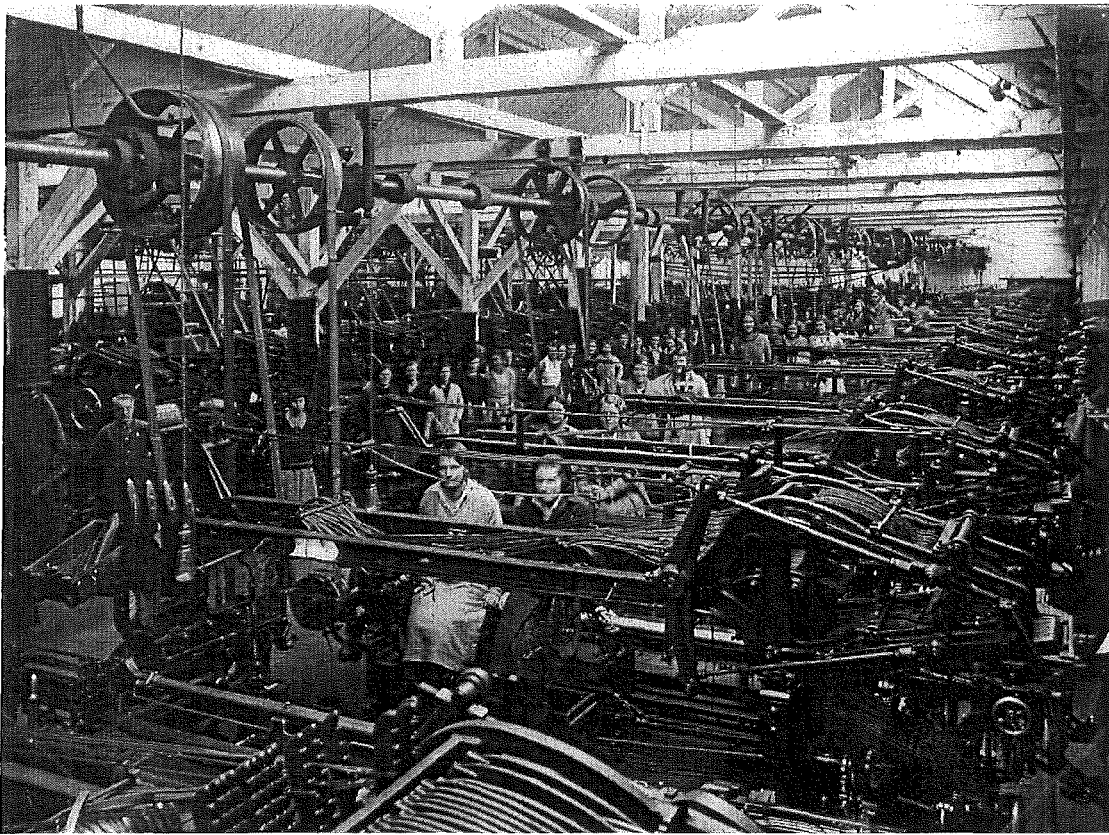
⁸⁹ MB114/A6, p. 168, Meeting of Directors, 11 April 1919.

⁹⁰ MB114/C2, Salaries Records 1908 – 1936.

Finishing “	17	4	21
Pattern Weaving	5		5
Designing Department	1		1
Office Staff	2	2	4
=====			
Totals	154	129	283

Sections such as weaving, considered acceptable for females, again showed a predominance of women workers. Winding, burling, and twisting also indicated much higher rates of female work participation. Positions such as these that required dexterous and nimble fingers were considered ideal for the ‘fairer sex.’ They were also positions not considered suitable for men since they were generally monotonous and ‘naturally’ thought of as belonging within the ‘women’s sphere.’ According to Irma Dzenis, “men had their jobs, women had theirs. Women were mostly winders and weavers, there were men weavers too, not many, but they were still paid more, though they didn’t do the job any better than the women, women are more dexterous, still you couldn’t tell the men anything because they were men.”⁹¹ The worsted department is interesting because it shows nearly the same number of men and women working together (12 men and 14 women). What the figures do not tell us is whether both sexes were doing exactly the same job. In the weaving department, for instance, most men were either supervisors or tuners (those who ensured the looms were working correctly). Indeed, Illustration 14 depicts what is probably a supervisor standing in the foreground of the weaving department. Finishers, on the other hand, showed a greater number of men at 17 with only 4 women. The few women in this department indicates ‘finishing’ was considered a skilled profession and therefore more likely to be performed by men, moreover, it is likely these women were in less responsible positions within the finishing department. It is also worth noting, the company did not include under the heading

⁹¹ I. Dzenis, Interview, 7 October 2000.



III. 14

Sections of the Weaving Department at the Kaiapoi Mill. Date unknown

Photographer: unknown

When thinking of women and their work within a woollen mill the weaving department springs to mind. Sitting or standing for long hours on end, weaving was a monotonous process requiring nimble fingers and therefore thought to be a most suitable position for women to be employed in. Yet despite the working conditions female labourers made lifelong friendships here.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E233



III. 15

Kaiapoi Woollen Mill – Spinning Department Date unknown

Photographer: unknown

Women certainly did work within the Spinning Department as shown here in this photograph probably taken in the early to mid twenties. Indeed, of the nearly forty people portrayed here only three men are visible; given their style of clothing and their close proximity to the workers they were most likely supervisors rather than management. The sheer size and number of machines gives a clue to the dreadful clamour that must have been produced when all were operating at the same time; little wonder then that after so many years in this environment women suffered serious hearing loss.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E118

‘spinning department,’ although, Irma Dzenis claimed she was (at least initially) a spinner; such a claim is supported when Illustration 15 is taken into account. .

The number of women working in the woollen manufacturing industry emphasises its acceptability as a paid, yet gendered, form of employment. Yet, after the First World War, the occupation most in demand for females was in domestic service.⁹² MacDonald notes, however, that the resurgence of domestic employment in this period, and during the seriously depressed years of the early 1930s, has been simplistically identified as a solution to female unemployment. However, between 1911 and 1936 there was, in fact, an overall decline in numbers of domestic servants.⁹³ This decline is hardly surprising given that domestic employment required long hours of work, paid poor wages, and was associated with unsolicited sexual advances, cramped and uncomfortable accommodation and arduous duties.⁹⁴ This period of transition saw women move away from domestic service and into areas of employment such as factory work or manufacturing that offered a relative sense of independence impossible to achieve while in domestic servitude. This period also saw an increase of female participation within office work. Table XI shows such new positions had become available at the Kaiapoi mill, with two women described as office workers. There were increasing opportunities for female administrative workers: after all, office employment was certainly physically easier, and healthier given the conditions of some of the departments in the mill, but the hours were long, and unlike woollen and textile labourers, office workers had no union to support them.

Work at the Kaiapoi mill was also “horizontally segregated, with men in positions of authority, and higher pay, even in areas of ‘women’s work’ where the majority

⁹² C.MacDonald, ‘Strangers at the Hearth,’ in B.Brookes (ed), *At Home in New Zealand: History, Houses, People* (Wellington, Bridget Williams Books, 2000), p. 49.

⁹³ Ibid., p. 55.

⁹⁴ C.Simpson, p. 74.

employed were women.”⁹⁵ Indeed, throughout the history of the KWMMCo at no stage did any female reach the lofty heights of management. As stated, women at the Kaiapoi mill could only ever hope to be promoted to the supervisory role of forewoman.⁹⁶ Irma Dzenis reached the role of forewoman during her 21 years at the mill; however, as mentioned earlier, her wages remained lower than those of her male counterparts.⁹⁷ Hierarchical in structure, the KWMMCo’s management remained male dominated until the business was closed.

The gendered view that wage work for women ended with “marriage and a baby,” which was then followed by the “unpaid work of keeping house and children,” was not to occur to a great extent at the Kaiapoi mill.⁹⁸ That is not to say the female employees did not get married and have a family, only that many continued working after marriage and returned to paid work once their children were old enough.

Kessler-Harris notes that in a

New York example in 1909, more than a third of the women working in one New England mill were married, a figure confirmed by a nationwide government survey published the following year. Despite constant accusations that women worked only to supplement family income, the evidence suggests that even in intact male-headed families, need, not caprice, motivated women’s wage work... and women who headed families and were responsible for their own or for others’ support found the push into the work force even greater.⁹⁹

For the women of Kaiapoi, the mill provided the main source of employment, especially as the North Canterbury Freezing Company (the other large employer in town) hired only men. In times of economic strife the mill provided a ‘safety net’ for many of the township’s women (and men, especially during the freezing works off-season). In return the relatively isolated township and mill, which was very dependent on its female labour-force, appeared more willing to employ married

⁹⁵ P. Mein-Smith, ‘Capital and Labour: Resisting Globalisation’, in D. Denoon, P. Mein-Smith and M. Wyndham, p. 243.

⁹⁶ I. Dzenis, Interview, 7 October 2000.

⁹⁷ Ibid.

⁹⁸ S. Eldred-Grigg, p. 83. See also E. Olssen, where he points out that “most women married and left the paid workforce.” p. 95

⁹⁹ A. Kessler-Harris, p. 122.

women. This was unlike Christchurch which had a wide supply of, especially, unskilled females to choose from. Indeed, by examining the respective length of service of females within the clothing and costume factories it is obvious the company had a very high labour turnover rate (Figures III and IV). There were 23 women with a respective length of service of one month and under in the company's clothing factory. For service of one year and under there was a total of 95 females. Yet, for two years and under there were only 36 women. Only five women had remained in service for ten years, one for 24 years, two for 25, one for 26 and two for 30 years. Such a high turnover rate within the first two years of the costume factory is not quite as obvious. In fact, for service of one year and under there were 14 women. There were 13 women with a respective length of service of two years, and six with a length of three years. Only two women had remained in the costume factory longer than 10 years. One had been there for 12 years and the other for 14. However, the turnover rate for the first three years could be considered quite high. The costume factory was not as large or as established as the clothing factory and naturally hired fewer people. Reasons for such a high turnover have not been made clear; however, in a letter to the chairman of directors in 1923 Thomas Leithead reported on the Radley mill,

we have investigated the question of girls leaving the mill and in no recent case could we find that the workers have left for any [reasons] of the factory, in every case except one the girls leaving for reasons outside the mill, one girl stating that her head would not stand the noise of the machines.¹⁰⁰

According to Evon Adcock, who worked at the Radley mill for at least a decade, "while there was a core of workers, many came and left [because they] couldn't stand the noise and hard work."¹⁰¹ As mentioned in chapter 1, unfortunately we do not have the figures for the Kaiapoi mill. However, such turnover rates seem unlikely, especially as many of the women who initially worked at the mill as single women remained at work once they were married, and others returned to employment after having families. Indeed, Elaine Dickson (who was originally

¹⁰⁰ MB114/A7, p. 155, Meeting of Directors, 30 April 1923.

¹⁰¹ E. Adcock, Interview, 22 October 2000

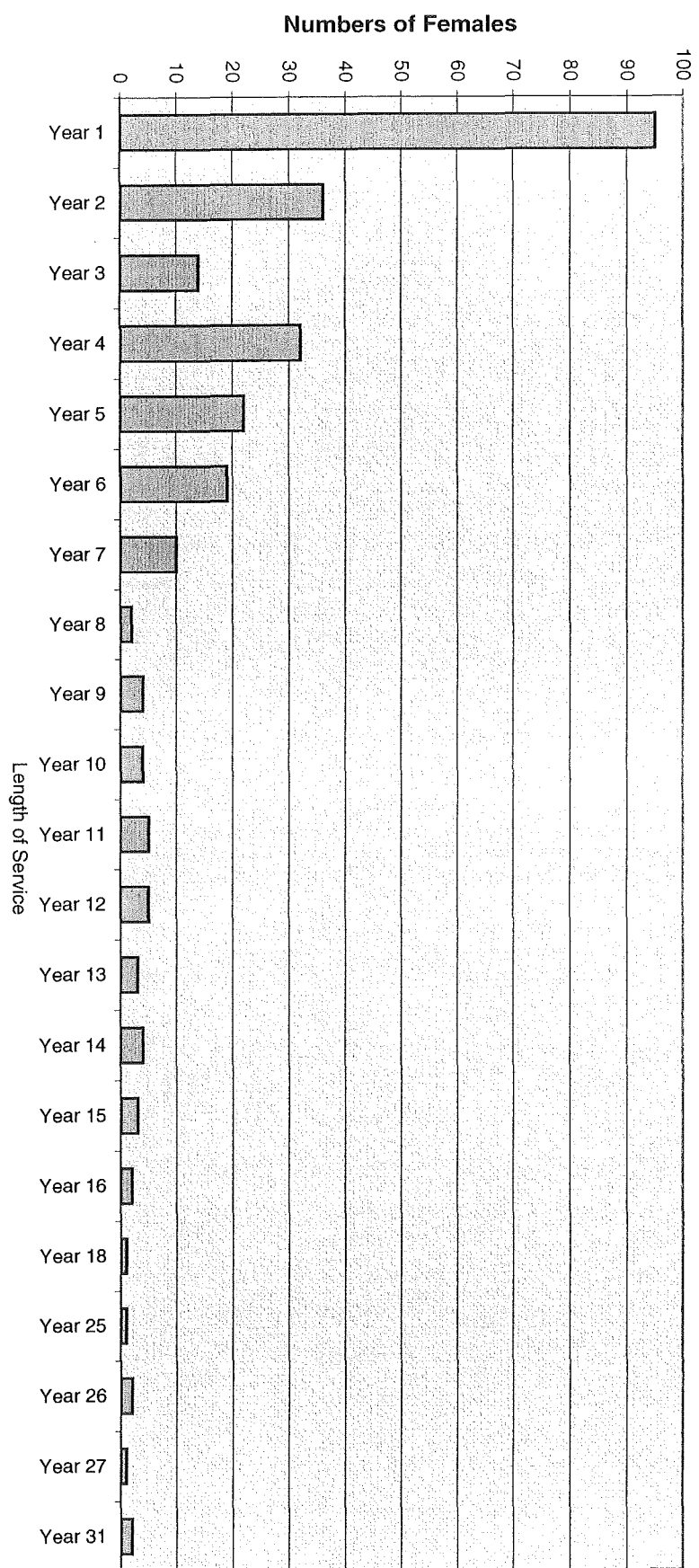


Figure III: Length of Service for all Female Workers in the Clothing Factory 1912

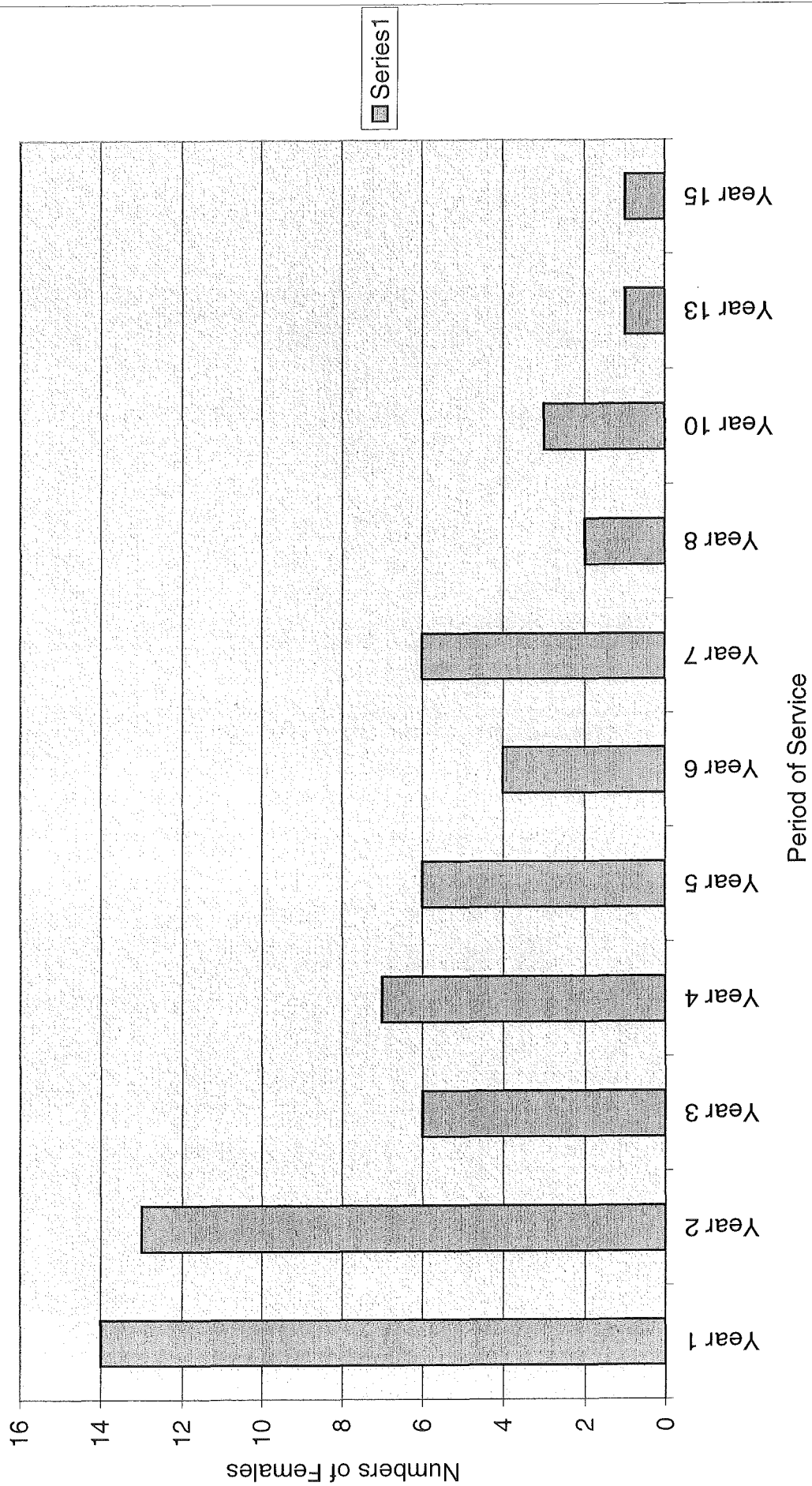


Figure IV: Length of Service for all Female Workers in the Costume Factory 1912

'manpowered' to the mill) went back to work once her children were old enough.¹⁰² Irma Dzenis had to find someone to look after her baby, so that she could remain at work.¹⁰³ In fact, while some women like Francis Hullen left the mill because they started a family, even she notes that she remained at the mill once she was married.¹⁰⁴ Dzenis maintains that more than half the women at the Kaiapoi mill were married.¹⁰⁵ The company's labour shortage meant skilled married women were acceptable to supplement the supply of unskilled single girls.

Rooms of Opportunity

Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service, the booklet prepared for the company's 1920 recruitment drive, focuses on the physical and moral benefits for their young women employees. The main objective which was, essentially, to convince parents to allow their daughters to work at the Kaiapoi mill. While still enjoying the benefits of post-war production, the company was keen not only to maintain its standard workforce in the district, but also to expand it. Expansion could only be achieved in a relatively isolated area by assuring younger generations and their parents that the work and conditions would be appealing. The booklet promotes the idea that any girl who labours at the mill would be provided with 'rooms of opportunity.' However, the title is rather a misnomer since, it would appear, the only 'opportunity' offered by the booklet was a life of 'domestic bliss.'

¹⁰² E. Dickson, Interview, 21 October 2000. The term 'manpowered' relates to a 1940s wartime measure whereby women were required to replace those men going off to war in the primary (most vital) industries. However, D. Montgomerie argues that

the majority of women under National Service Department direction were not 'manpowered' in the sense that they were called in for an interview and then directed into a 'war job'. Most women were in their 'war job' when the regulations came into force and were 'manpowered' when that industry was declared essential and their freedom to leave the job was restricted. D. Montgomerie, 'The Limitations of Wartime Change. Women War Workers in New Zealand,' *New Zealand Journal of History*, Volume 23, Number 1, April 1989, p. 75.

¹⁰³ I. Dzenis, Interview, 7 October 2000.

¹⁰⁴ Francis Hullen, Interview, May 2000

¹⁰⁵ I. Dzenis, Interview, 7 October 2000.

The foreword of the booklet not only shows how optimistic the KWMMCo was about the immediate future, but gives a distinct indication of where the message is aimed.

The writer L. S. Fanning, describes how

...the Company is eager to increase its production of Materials for Clothing, as well as Garments ready to wear. The Company wishes the supply to overtake the demand. Machinery and other equipment are ready for this expansion which is sorely needed by the people of New Zealand, but shortage of workers is a hindrance at present. The wages, the general conditions, the tone of the rooms, the healthful, pleasant environment, with the sympathetic spirit of the employers as expressed in the Welfare Fund, and other benefits, make an excellent opportunity for an independent livelihood. Mothers and daughters who read these pages will see proof that the title of this Booklet, "Rooms of Opportunity," is thoroughly justified in the Kaiapoi service.¹⁰⁶

The booklet was, indeed, a 'good news' piece of propaganda that was aimed unashamedly towards the mothers and daughters of the district. It also discussed many aspects of the company's policies and reputation. Praising the company's pure wool policy was a tactic used in order to entice prospective employees: "The reputation of the company has been achieved by the adoption of [its] pure-wool policy, and the public may rely on this being continued."¹⁰⁷ Fanning quotes a passage from the 1917 annual report to show the company's strategy in relation to its workers, that being, "briefly, the basis of employment is a fair and square deal."¹⁰⁸ The company was showing an honest face to both the public and their labour force by trying to convey the idea that honesty has been and always will be the best policy for the KWMMCo.

The promotion of a "big family" spirit within the KWMMCo was also intended to attract prospective employees. With the company as the patriarchal head, the view of a responsible and kind parent is presented repeatedly throughout the work:

Everything reasonable that fair-minded, warm hearted employers can do to make work pleasant and to enable workers to maintain themselves in good health and comfort the Kaiapoi management is doing, not grudgingly, but

¹⁰⁶ L.S.Fanning, *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service* (1920), Foreword.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 4.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

gladly, in full recognition of the principle that employers have social as well as industrial responsibilities.¹⁰⁹

Part of those responsibilities included the introduction of welfare and sickness benefits, which will be discussed in further detail in the next chapter. However, while the company may have provided its employees with aid and in the process enhanced its own reputation, the balance of power was always to remain in company hands.

To the female who was looking for paid work in Kaiapoi, the company's claim that wages were ahead of arbitration awards would have been difficult to resist. However, by emphasising 'freedom of opportunity' to earn more money by working even harder, the suggestion is present that the company aimed to make a profit at the workers' expense. It would appear Fanning anticipated this:

Beginners in the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company's service receive a wage which is twice the award rate. Every worker has freedom of opportunity to earn a high wage, according to ability and energy... Workers can make much more than the award rate in any of the Company's departments; management always encourages them to earn more. The more a worker earns, the better the Company is pleased. "Because the Company gets more profit," a cynic may say, but such a comment would be as unjust as it would be incorrect. Investigation shows that the Company is not eager to make a profit on wages; there is no speeding up for sordid motives. The workers have freedom of opportunity to earn high pay, in the full knowledge that the Company is not "farming" them.¹¹⁰

Fanning depicted the KWMCo as an honest and concerned employer and to a great extent it was. However, the idea that profits were not the company's chief concern is disingenuous.

The 'private sphere' of domesticity is lauded in the section titled 'Insuring for Life – The Home-making Girl Wins.' A recruitment technique aimed at potential employees, it offers a future for the girl who will be safe in the knowledge that by

¹⁰⁹ L.S.Fanning, *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service* (1920), p. 6.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., pp. 7, 8.

working for the KWMCo she is preparing herself for married life and the financial pitfalls that go with it:

In the workrooms of the Kaiapoi Woollen Company a girl learns some of the important arts of home-making. She learns how to be helpful to herself and to her parents, and she gains skill which will be very beneficial to her when she has a home of her own. Before she is married she learns how to make her wages go further than one who lacks skill in the making of clothes – and when she is married this practical knowledge will help to conquer cost of living...The rule is that the mother has to do much making and mending. Therefore, when a girl chooses a livelihood which maintains her in comfort while she is single and trains her for money-saving when she is married, she is going the right way to happiness. It is notorious that many unhappy marriages owe their misery to the wives' lack of home-making ability. After the first glamour of romance has worn off, and housekeeping has to be done within the limits of the husband's earnings, an unskillful woman courts trouble.¹¹¹

By working at the mill the female employee was, indeed, 'insuring herself for life.' Yet, despite the impression the booklet's title gives, the only 'opportunity' open for the female employee, according to the company, was a domesticated life as someone's wife and mother. Such a passage justifies the continuation of the female workers 'career structure.' In other words, her repetitive and somewhat tedious job as a weaver or winder was the perfect training for her future domestic ('wife'/'mother') life, so there was no reason to reskill and teach her more interesting and satisfying work.

The image of a healthful environment, with a strict moral tone was intended to ease the minds of the parents of female potential employees. The company's fatherly concern was to provide reassurance, after all:

Every girl in the Kaiapoi Company's service has the satisfaction that, while her work is pleasant to her, it is also helpful – one of the primary necessities – to the community. While many are merely talking about "building the new nation," she knows that she is one of the builders. She finds herself, too, in good company. The management does not tolerate any thing likely to lower the tone of rooms which have won a high standard. The moral atmosphere is one which can give ease and peace of mind to parents and their daughters.¹¹²

¹¹¹ L.S.Fanning, *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service* (1920), p. 15.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, p. 17.

It is the daughters at whom the section titled 'Drudgery Banished' is aimed. Here the gendered division of labour is once again emphasised. For the female employee, the idea of working with up-to-date technology would have acted as an incentive. Fanning notes:

The girl is mistress of the machine – not the drudge. Marvellous machinery has been evolved to lighten the work, which no longer taxes the strength. Good light, ample space, and clean, fresh air are other aids to comfort.¹¹³

However, despite the use of what was termed 'modern machinery' work for women was still monotonous. Moreover, the idea that the girl was 'mistress of the machine' implied a certain level of autonomy. This was not the case, however, women had little authority or autonomy when working for the company.

Indeed, the study of the company's gendered labour and recruitment policies indicates women were working in positions that required manual dexterity; such skills were thought to be innate among women and therefore unsuitable for men. These positions were also monotonous and therefore perceived to be work within the female sphere. In fact, the staffing policies practised by the company were generally aimed directly towards skilled woollen workers, especially women. Management's keenness to travel overseas to seek potential employees also indicates how seriously they took the continued need for such workers. Their hidden policy of keeping local employees unskilled, however, meant that at times the Kaiapoi mill faced serious shortages of labour; as a result they also recruited unskilled workers. In Christchurch, at least, there was always a ready supply of unskilled female labour willing to work in woollen manufacturing, who could be employed more cheaply than men. Recruitment of these women was aided by local staffing strategies, such as producing the booklet *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service*, or establishing company owned hostels in Kaiapoi. These measures also served to enhance the KWMCo's paternalistic image.

¹¹³ L.S.Fanning, *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service* (1920), p. 18.

Chapter Five: Mill Town Families and Company Paternalism

Introduction

The KWMCO's social system of corporate paternalism, that is, a philosophy of benevolent control which treated workers as the corporation's children, permeated every aspect of life from the organisation of work to the management of boarding houses and the funding of charities.¹ One important facet of this social system was the company's encouragement of a family tradition of working for the mill. Between the period 1878-1942, generations of families worked for the company, but most especially at the Kaiapoi mill. The fact that Kaiapoi was relatively isolated and the mill was the township's largest employer meant that dissemination of family members old enough to find employment elsewhere did not occur. Rather they tended to become ensconced in the district. Such entrenchment was to prove beneficial, however; during periods of financial hardship families that worked together at the mill operated as an economic unit, therefore reducing the chances of complete financial ruin, or worse, starvation. Indeed, the study of the families' interaction within the world of work is an important aspect of family history. In Hareven's study of family and work in the Amoskeag Mills in Manchester, New Hampshire, she documented the role of the family as an active agent in relation to the industrial corporation:²

The family type most 'fit' to interact with the factory system was not an 'isolated' nuclear family but rather one embedded in extended kinship ties. In cushioning the adaptation to industrial work without excessively restricting the mobility of individual workers, kin were instrumental in serving the industrial employer and, at the same time, in advancing the interest of their own members and providing them with protection.³

Loyalty to the company was further reinforced by the series of paternalistic programmes that the KWMCo embarked on in the early twentieth century.

¹ T.Hareven, *Family Time and Industrial Time* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 10.

² T.Hareven, 'The History of the Family,' *American Historical Review*, Volume 96, 1991, p.114.

³ Ibid. To look further into the discussion of family history and studies in New Zealand, see Bronwyn Dalley, *Family Matters: Child Welfare in Twentieth Century New Zealand* (Auckland, Auckland University Press in association with the Historical Branch, Department of Internal Affairs, 1998), see also P.G.Koopman-Boyden's *Families in New Zealand Society* (Wellington, Methuen, 1978), and Koopman-Boyden's, *The Family and Government Policy in New Zealand* (Sydney, George Allen and Unwin, 1984).

These programmes are yet another important aspect of the company's social history. They were designed, in part, to keep up the morale of the families that acted as much of its labour force. They helped ensure continued productivity, promoted better relations between management and workers, and they served as an excellent source of identity formation with the company. The funding of social events such as picnics not only provided an opportunity to create a family atmosphere between management and worker, but also proved to be an excellent morale booster. The opportunity to receive company managed pensions was an important reason for workers and their children to remain employed at the mill for long periods of time. However, the fact that the pensions committee could reduce or cancel payments at will meant employees thought twice before endangering their relationship with management. While strong gender bias in the rules of the 'Welfare Benefit Fund Society' may have created some tensions between the female staff and patriarchal management, the very introduction of such a welfare scheme, which followed hard on the heels of the devastating 1918 influenza epidemic, also served to create a sense of personal indebtedness to the company by the worker. Paternal interest in the mill staff also resulted in a responsible attitude towards accident prevention and reporting. The compensation of workers injured while at work was made possible with the introduction of the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act 1900. However, the high rates of accidents within the woollen industry eventually concluded in the need for active accident prevention. By 1940 the KWMCo was one of the few woollen manufacturers regularly and, it would appear, honestly, reporting incidents involving injury at the mill to the Department of Labour. By the early 1960s the KWMCo had also introduced an occupational health nurse to the mill whose job it was to take active steps in curbing both short and long term health problems which were a direct consequence of employment at the mill.

Mill Town Families

Company paternalism, or the philosophy thereof, served to generate a level of loyalty which helped create family bonds to the mill and promote pride in the high quality work produced. Even those patriarchal sources of paternal concern found themselves tied there. Indeed, few attachments were stronger to the Kaiapoi mill than those of the Blackwell and the Leithead families. Their positions of

responsibility within the company and township necessarily made them chief progenitors of the paternalistic system. George Henry Blackwell, chairman of directors between 1884 and 1914, centred his and his family's lives around the mill and the mill town. As mentioned in chapter one, he was a member of the community's fire brigade, school committee, and mayor of the township for three years (1879-1882). His father-like role as leader of the company and, indeed, Kaiapoi, was consolidated by involving himself in so many of the town's organisations.⁴ The same can be said of his son J.H. Blackwell, who followed his father's footsteps not only into the company, but also as mayor of the town (twice) and as chairman and member of many of its associations. As for James Leithead (mill manager from 1880 to 1902), his paternal role at the mill was more personal. Like the Blackwells, James Leithead's son, Thomas, followed his father's footsteps and also became manager of the mill. A point of interest that will be discussed further on in this chapter is that the closer interactions between the mill manager and company employees meant the paternalistic system could become more entrenched into the workers' everyday lives.⁵ Less likely to serve a role as a paternal figure, but nevertheless still serving to act as an example of company and family loyalty is Thomas' son, Jim Leithead, who became chief designer at the mill during the 1930s. As leading families of the company and township, the Blackwells and Leitheads served as immediate sources of company paternal interest. Theirs was a role that also consolidated the relationship between town and mill. According to his great-grandson David Blackwell, who still resides in Kaiapoi, George Henry had publicly stated that the "mill staff provided Kaiapoi with many of its most useful citizens."⁶ Such a comment would serve to cement the workers' place and role within the community.

The mill staff was, to a large extent, made up of many immigrant families like the Leitheads, Monks and Dzenises.⁷ The paternalistic programmes set in place by the

⁴ D.Blackwell, Interview, 7 October 2000.

⁵ James Leithead's daughter married J.H. Blackwell, suggesting the bonds between the two leading families were close.

⁶ D. Blackwell, Interview, 7 October 2000.

⁷ Ibid. Ivan Monk's mother arrived from the Galashiels district in Scotland. While there she was recruited for the company by Thomas.R.Leithead. The Dzenises arrived after the Second World War as refugees. Irma Dzenis' husband was a skilled loom tuner and while in Auckland was recruited to work in Kaiapoi.

company would have helped influence such families to stay working at the mill. While the company-owned hostels provided individual personnel with accommodation, purpose built mill houses provided homes for families. Illustration 16 shows some of the company built dwellings situated around the mill. Indeed, many families such as the Dzenises made use of the mill houses until they could afford a home of their own.

While generations of mill workers could find regular and long-term employment at the Kaiapoi mill, the same could not, initially, be said of employment opportunities elsewhere in the township. There were very few other places in Kaiapoi to work except for the town shops which, in turn, were reliant on the mill workers to buy products from them. Indeed, not only did the mill keep the local people employed, but it kept the township's businesses running as well.⁸ According to one employee, mill workers were forced to buy their goods in Kaiapoi as transport into town [Christchurch] was difficult and could take up to half a day as the schedule was not very convenient.⁹ As a result, the town's varied stores contained much of what was required by the many employees at the mill.¹⁰ Shops like Blackwell's department store, Blakeleys, a furniture and bedding store, Ashby's, a curtaining and haberdashery outlet, and even the only two shoe shops in town, Bridens and Miss Brokerbank's, provided the mill workers with goods.¹¹ The *Cyclopedia of New Zealand* also notes a number of small businesses and shops operating in the township including: the Kaiapoi Brewery which was established in 1869, a creamery business where, during the season, there were up to 57 local suppliers of cream which was then forwarded daily to the central factory at Addington, two bakeries, and a tailor, outfitter, and manufacturers business run by Alfred Johnson.¹² This business, founded in 1898, had a particularly close relationship with the Kaiapoi Mill. Johnson's materials were nearly all manufactured at the mill and included large stocks of tweeds, shirts, and hosiery. Compared to other

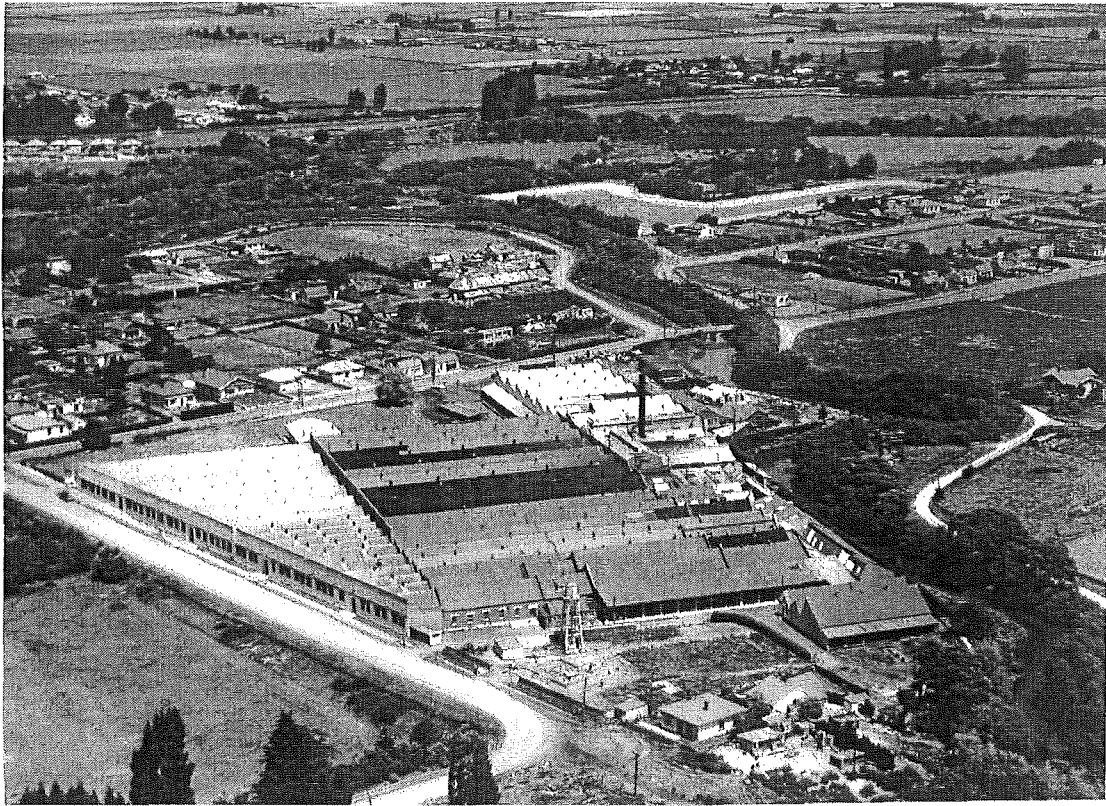
⁸ T.Secker, 'A Business and Social History of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company 1915-1942,' Research Essay, (University of Canterbury, 1999), p. 33.

⁹ H.McAllister in T.Secker, 1999, p. 34.

¹⁰ In 1903 the mill employed around 600 people nearly half the total population of Kaiapoi and the surrounding district which stood at just over two thousand. *Cyclopedia of New Zealand: Industrial, Descriptive, Historical, Biographical, Facts, Figures, Illustrations*, Canterbury Provincial District, Volume 3, (Wellington, Cyclopedia Company, 1897-1908), p. 431.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., p.429.



III. 16

Aerial View of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill. 1950s

Photographers: Auster Airviews, Timaru

At its largest the mill took up ten and a half acres of space. This photograph taken in the mid 1950s not only shows the vast expanse of the mill, but also the many Company owned houses, purposely built for its employees, situated nearby.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E125

retailers in the township, Johnson's was most likely of medium size, employing about five hands.¹³ Aside from the local hotels most of the other businesses were very small consisting of probably no more than one to five workers. These included a cabinet maker, a saddler and harness maker, a blacksmith and wheelwright, a stationer and fancy goods dealer, a watchmaker and jeweller, a fellmonger, and a sawmiller. The only other business at the time that may have required more workers was the Kaiapoi Produce Company which was established in 1882. This initially successful company bought and shipped farm produce "to London, the Cape and other parts of the world."¹⁴ Unfortunately, there are few primary sources on the town's stores and their reliance on the Kaiapoi mill for their very existence. Interviews with those old enough to remember particular shops all state that the mill was vital because its employees kept the stores running. While there is little, if any, documentary evidence to back this up, it would seem self-evident that the largest business in such a small town would, during this period, help keep the town's smaller concerns solvent. Indeed, it was not until 1915, with the establishment of the North Canterbury Freezing Company, that competing large scale, if admittedly, seasonal, employment was offered to the men of the district.¹⁵ Yet, despite the introduction of the freezing works into the district, Kaiapoi was still thought of as a mill town. The town's citizens awoke and set their watches by the mill whistle, while the sight of dozens of mill girls cycling home after work is still a fond memory of many.¹⁶ According to David Blackwell, such everyday occurrences helped create a sense of "warmth and substance... [and a] sense of solidarity in the town."¹⁷

The Kaiapoi mill did, indeed, serve as a source of identity for those families who lived and worked in the township. Town citizens, whether they worked for the company or not, could take pride in the fact that for generations their family members had been employed at the mill. Proudly cementing her place within the mill town, 93 year old Ena Capstick stated, "there had always been a Capstick as a

¹³ *Cyclopedia of New Zealand*, p. 429.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.431.

¹⁵ The North Canterbury Freezing Company was registered in 1915 and the 'works' opened in 1916. The main business was the slaughtering of lambs and sheep for export, but some bacon curing was done. They also produced sweetbreads, three grades of tallow, two kinds of fertiliser and sausage skins. *Canterbury Times*, 20 November 1907, p. 40,41.

¹⁶ I.Monk, Interview, 30 January 2001.

dye-er at the Kaiapoi mill.”¹⁸ Son had loyally followed father into employment there since the KWMCo’s establishment in 1878.¹⁹ For a depiction of the old dye-house, along with one of the Capstick clan, see Illustration 17. Kaiapoi born and bred Ena, however, was not allowed to join her family members at the mill; her father, recognising the difficulties of the job and the health problems associated with woollen manufacturing, had firmly decided that while his wife and son could be employed at the mill, his daughter could not.²⁰ Nevertheless, she displayed mill loyalty as though she were a long time employee. Such was the relationship between mill and town citizens. Daughters also followed mothers and grandmothers to the mill. Ngairi McNichol spent 35 years there, following in the footsteps of her mother, a weaver, before becoming a garment designer. She had followed the example of both her parents and grandparents who had nearly all spent their working lives employed by the KWMCo.²¹ The textile industry was in her blood, as her great-grandfather had initially worked in a cotton mill in England before coming out to New Zealand. When her father died, her mother remarried and gave birth to another five children, making eight in all, and “all her children worked at the mill at some time or other...it was a family thing...”²² Her family expected employment in the mill to be a natural progression from school. She attests, “I think I had about five days off in my whole time I was there... it was my life, the mill. I put that before family, friends, everything.”²³ When her husband was taken to hospital for a period of 17 days (he eventually died there), she visited him only at night “because I worked during the day.”²⁴ Indeed, upon the death of her husband, she stated: “the funeral was one day and I was back at work the next.”²⁵ It was not that she cared less for her husband and family, it was just that the fulfilment of design work created years of entrenched loyalty. Long-term employee John Capstick was also known for his strong loyalty to the company.

¹⁷ D.Blackwell, Interview, 7 October 2000.

¹⁸ E.Capstick, Interview, 17 April 2000.

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

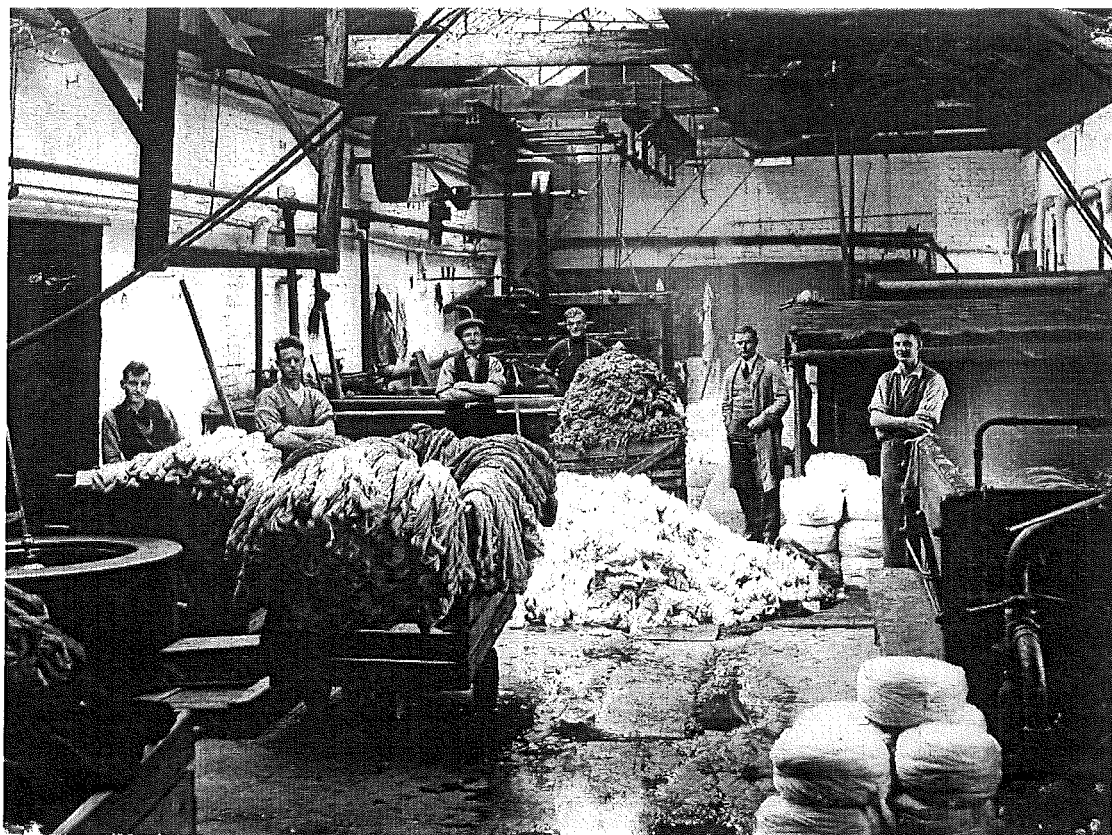
²¹ N. McNichol, Interview, 30 January 2001.

²² N. McNichol, Interview, 12 December 2000.

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.



Ill. 17

Kaiapoi Woollen Mill – Old Dyehouse. 1929

Photographer: unknown

*From left to right are: F. Brockelbank, J. Hall, B. Ellis,
T. Spence, T. Capstick, R. Collister.*

One can imagine dyeing wool to be a messy, damp process and it was. Nonetheless, this photograph also serves as evidence of family ties to the mill. There were a number of Brockelbanks and Capsticks employed there over the years.

The dyeing of wool generally came after the scouring process which cleaned the wool allowing the dye to be absorbed into the fibre (see Glossary). Note the steam escaping from the vats and the use of natural lighting via the skylight in the roof.

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E174

When his son was forced away from work due to illness, John Capstick, who had in fact retired, marched into the mill ready to replace his son while he was sick. For his loyalty, not to mention a good work ethic, Capstick was rewarded with a gift appropriate for a retiree, an easy chair.²⁶

Working at the Kaiapoi mill also meant families could operate both as an economic and a 'corporate' unit. The view of the family as a corporate unit, as an entity working together collectively, fitted well within the world of the textile mill.²⁷ It fitted well because the corporation encouraged family employment and because individual adaptation to the world of work and to survival in a factory system depended on each member's ability to function as a part of a collective family unit.²⁸ According to Hareven, many corporation policies were family oriented:

The Amoskeag recruited its workers through family and kinship ties and encouraged their placement in the workrooms in family clusters. It often relied on relatives to socialise and discipline family members in the factory setting and to assist them in learning work processes.²⁹

While there is less evidence, both oral or documentary, to suggest that families at the Kaiapoi mill worked together in family clusters, it would appear that the recruitment of local workers by family members certainly occurred. Ngarie McNichol, whose entire family was employed at the mill at one time or another, suggests they had little choice but to work there as "mum would be signing us on... at 'Greenwood's College'" as soon as they were old enough.³⁰ The fact that there were so many generational links at the mill suggests that family recruitment was widely practised. Working together meant the family could also operate as an economic unit. During financially difficult periods, as in the Depression, such a unit could prove vital. Facing 'lay-offs' and reduced hours, the mill family found itself in a more secure position than the individual worker, for at least one employee within the family unit would have a wage coming in to help support the rest. Such an income (if the wage earner was male) was at odds with what was

²⁶ MB114/A10, p.39, Meeting of Directors, 1 December 1933.

²⁷ T. Hareven, 1982, p. 62.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ N.McNichol, Interview, 12 December 2000.

considered to be a family wage, that is, a wage sufficient to support a wife and children in decency and comfort.³¹ In 1925 the basic wage in New Zealand supposedly provided for a man, his wife and only two children (acknowledging the decline in white fertility in defiance of pronatalism).³² From 1936 New Zealand adopted the norm of three children for setting the basic wage.³³ One clear consequence of the concept of a 'living wage' for a family, however, was that women's pay rates were appreciably lower than those for men. As has already been indicated, the Court set wages for women within its jurisdiction at between half and two-thirds of the male rate.³⁴ Nevertheless, even at a lesser wage, working as a part of an economic unit at the mill made it easier for the family to survive economically.

Company Paternalism

Paternalistic ideology permeated the company's entire management system.³⁵ The mill manager personified the paternalistic system for the Kaiapoi mill. He had to be fair and considerate, and, at the same time, to be firm and insist on performance and discipline. He had also needed the ability to relate to workers and to show some interest in their personal lives.³⁶ Indeed, George Greenwood, mill manager from 1930 to 1959 took keen notice of the accommodation problem faced by mill employees. When Irma Dzenis and her husband arrived in Kaiapoi, accommodation was either difficult to find or too expensive.³⁷ Receiving private assistance from Greenwood (he found them a company-owned house) indicated, to the newly arrived immigrant family, that he cared. Such attention served to enhance personal loyalty towards the manager. In fact, Dzenis called Greenwood "a nice man and a fair boss" when others who worked at the mill frequently called the establishment 'Greenwood's College' because of his perceived toughness as a taskmaster.³⁸ Ngarie McNicol remembers the 'respect' the employees had towards

³¹ P.Mein Smith, 'Capital and Labour Resisting Globalization,' in D.Denoon, P. Mein Smith, and M.Wyndham, *A History of Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2000), p. 238.

³² Ibid.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ E.Olssen, *Building the New World: Work, Politics and Society in Caversham, 1880s – 1920s* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1995), p. 83.

³⁵ T. Hareven, 1982, p. 50.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ I.Dzenis, Interview, 7 October 2000.

³⁸ Ibid.

him: “there would always be one or two who would say ‘oh well I told Geordy Greenwood bullshit,’ [but] they wouldn’t have told Geordy Greenwood anything, they wouldn’t have dared call him Geordy Greenwood, he would have been **Mr** Greenwood, that was the respect that that man had.”³⁹ For a depiction of Greenwood and the mill management see Illustration 18. Greenwood represented the highest level of company management based in Kaiapoi, and part of his managerial position was to encourage loyalty towards the business.

While the management system supported the policy of benevolent control, the main pillars of the paternalistic system were the foremen. According to Hareven, from the corporation’s point of view an overseer was an enlightened despot, exacting and compassionate at the same time.⁴⁰

In addition to managing daily production in his department and maintaining discipline the overseer was to foster among the workers a spirit of loyalty to the corporation, to socialise the workers to industrial procedures and to exemplify by his own conduct the ... commitment to efficiency and employee welfare.⁴¹

The respect for the mill foremen came from the fact that they had come “up through the line..[they] had served their apprenticeship, [and] they had been there and done that. They understood the problems of the worker, and another thing with the foremen, nobody could put it over him, they wouldn’t dare try.”⁴² Ivan Monk goes on to note that, like the mill management, all foremen were called mister, and “they weren’t supposed to have their meals with the staff, they had it with the other foremen. All the managers and foremen could have their morning tea together, but the common old Joe Bloggs worker had it on his own – very big class distinction.”⁴³ Despite this perceived class distinction, foremen created a certain level of loyalty and respect and in the process maintained a level of control over the workers that ensured good production rates along with a secure workforce.

³⁹ N.McNichol, Interview, 30 January 2001.

⁴⁰ T.Hareven, 1982, p. 50.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² N.McNichol, Interview, 30 January 2001.

⁴³ I.Monk, Interview, 30 January 2001.



Ill. 18

Office Staff, Foremen and Managers at the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill. 1933

Photographer: unknown

Back row from left to right: Tom Drabble, Lionel Oram, Jock Richardson, Lee Oram, Tom Williamson, William Hart, Frank Richards, Sam Richards

Middle row from left to right: Mark Greenwood, Abraham Blackley, George Greenwood (manager), Robert Gill, Arthur Brown

Front row from left to right: Oliser Kitson, Harry Thornley, Theo Capstick, Edith Hart, Nancy Rice, Jimmy Leithead, Jock Brown, Jack Johnston

The centre of power at the mill; the managers are most easily recognisable in their suits and ties, the foremen in their overcoats or jackets and the only two women in the photo constitute the office staff. This is also one of the few depictions of George Greenwood at the plant; his reputation as a strict employer resulted in the mill often being called 'Greenwood's college.'

Courtesy of the Kaiapoi Historical Museum, Reference PF/E237

Fostering loyalty while keeping up the morale of its workforce, meant, for the KWMMCo, introducing events and schemes that reinforced its parental image. One such event was a yearly picnic funded by the company. Picnics, especially for the Kaiapoi mill staff, had been provided intermittently over the years, but following the post-war boom created by the First World War, large, all encompassing company picnics were to become yearly events. In 1921 the financially secure business held a huge picnic at Little River.⁴⁴ Gathering all the workers and managers together in a more relaxed setting than in the workplace helped create and consolidate a family atmosphere. By playing games and eating together closer ties were fostered. The event, which was lauded as the largest private picnic that the Railway Department, Christchurch, had ever catered for, also enhanced company loyalty among the workforce:⁴⁵ “Two trains were provided [with] 19 carriages from Christchurch and 13 from Kaiapoi, the 32 carriages being closely packed with the company’s employees and their friends, numbering considerably over 2000.”⁴⁶ Keen to be viewed as financially supportive towards its workers, the long distance travelled to the picnic was carefully noted, as was the fact that the company paid for the trip. A view of the parental company indulging its worker children was one to be enhanced:

There was one very pleasing feature with regard to this picnic, that the employees specially requested to be permitted to relieve the directors of all responsibility in regard to the management. This was conceded, and nothing appeared to have been overlooked, showing, at least, that in the management of picnics the services of the directors were not required.⁴⁷

The annual picnics continued, with the company providing the average sum of £50 each year, until the onset of the Depression.⁴⁸ Indeed, by 1931 the general manager, William Carey, was suggesting that “in consequence of present conditions, the picnic[s] might [have] to be discontinued in subsequent years.”⁴⁹ After 1933 the picnics resumed (although the sources do not suggest the events were on such a regular basis) and it would appear still served as a source of morale and employee allegiance to both management and company.

⁴⁴ MB114/A7, p. 43, Meeting of Directors, 22 August 1921.

⁴⁵ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill: Documents, NDF/E, Annual Report, 22 August 1921, p. 18.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Ibid., pp. 18,19.

⁴⁸ MB114/A8, p. 128, Special Meeting, 17 January 1927. It appears the picnics were held mostly in North Canterbury from then on, particularly in Oxford. MB114/A7, p.71 Meeting of Directors, 1 February 1922.

Another morale booster that also served to enhance loyalty among the labour force was the establishment of the Employees' Welfare Fund Society in 1919.⁵⁰ Its formation came about as a direct result of the 1918 influenza epidemic which had devastating effects throughout New Zealand, including the Kaiapoi township. On 15 November 1918, three days after first reports that influenza was raging in Kaiapoi, *The Press* stated that half the workforce of the woollen mill was down; four days after this the *Lyttelton Times* reported the mill had closed.⁵¹ Kaiapoi had certainly suffered a severe epidemic, in fact, the township had the second highest death rate in North Canterbury (excluding Christchurch) at 10.8 per 1000, with only Ashburton topping that figure at 17 per 1000.⁵² Kaiapoi's population at the time was 1560 while Rangiora's reached a total of 1808; however, Rangiora suffered a death rate of only 4.9 per 1000. A decisive reason for the inequality of death rates in the townships has not been reached. Nonetheless, it is significant that Kaiapoi had only one doctor and was, according to Rice, less organised at dealing with the outbreak than Rangiora.⁵³ Despite the severity of the situation, the Chairman of the KWMCo Board insisted that the Kaiapoi woollen mill workforce was not especially hard hit. In the 1919 Shareholders' Report J. Frostick states how

Special thanks [were] recorded to that band of volunteers, all being members of the warehouse and factory staffs, who, regardless of any personal risk, thoroughly cleansed the warehouse and factory daily from top to bottom. Every hole and corner was dealt with and I feel sure that to their great efforts is due the small percentage of very serious cases in our factories.⁵⁴

However, Frostick may have been 'glossing over' the losses the factory suffered in order to maintain a level of confidence among the shareholders. Table XII shows that Henry Ellenberger, who died on 18 November 1918, and Brain Turnbull, who died four days later, were confirmed as being woollen mill hands. While only two

⁴⁹ MB114/A9, p. 67, Meeting of Directors, 23 January 1931.

⁵⁰ There was also a Sickness and Accident Benefit Society established in 1896. This society not only provided for those members who were impaired from work due to illness or injury, but also provided a funeral fund for those employees killed at work. Little primary evidence, however, exists to support any contention that the Society lasted very long. *The Press*, 22 January 1896, p. 5.

⁵¹ *The Press*, 15 November 1918 and the *Lyttelton Times*, 19 November 1918.

⁵² G.W.Rice *Black November: the 1918 Influenza Epidemic in New Zealand* (Wellington, Allen and Unwin, 1988), p. 200.

⁵³ *Ibid.*

⁵⁴ KHM, Item 78/214, 'The Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited,' 1919, p. 14.

definite employees of the mill were among the listed victims of the influenza, a number of others could well have worked at the mill also. Among those listed were five labourers including Henry's brother Charles. Since the mill employed labourers on both a permanent and casual basis it is likely that some of those labourers who died of influenza did, in fact, work at the mill. The same could also be said of those who came under the occupation title of 'housewife' since, as has been discussed in Chapter Four, many married women, particularly those whose children were of school age, continued to work at the mill.

Table 12

Deaths in Kaiapoi from the 1918 Influenza Epidemic⁵⁵

Date	Name	Sex & Age	Occupation	Issue by Age & Sex
16 Nov.	Cecil Mellor	M: 39	Butcher	1F: 9 years
17 Nov.	Maud E. Humphries	F: 26	Housewife	3M: 8, 4 years, 3 months, 1F: 2
18 Nov.	Henry Ellenberger	M: 34	Wool Mill Hand	Married, No Issue
18 Nov.	William Moody	M: 45	Engine Driver	1M: 1, 1F: 5
19 Nov.	Frances Evans	F: 54	Housewife	1M: 19, 8F: 31, 29, 27, 24, 22, 17, 15, 10 years
21 Nov.	Philip O'Connor	M: 43	Labourer	1M: 11, 1F: 10 years
21 Nov.	Hannah O'Connor	F: 36	Spinster	Both were brother and sister
22 Nov.	Brian Trunbull	M: 24	Wool Mill Hand	Single
22 Nov.	Frederick Creamer	M: 20	-----	Single
25 Nov.	Charles Ellenberger (Brother of Henry)	M: 39	Labourer	1M: 3, 1F: 1 year
25 Nov.	Herbert Ward	M: 35	Labourer	3M: 10, 9, 3, 5F: 7, 7, 6, 4, 1 year
25 Nov.	George Eder	M: 44	Labourer	8M: 18, 16, 14, 12, 7, 5, 3, 6 months, 2F: 19,

⁵⁵ Notes from Death Registers, Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Lower Hutt. I am indebted to Dr G.W. Rice for this information from his research notes for his book *Black November: the 1918 Influenza Epidemic in New Zealand* (Wellington, Allen and Unwin, 1988).

				10 years
26 Nov.	Annie Puddle	F: 39	Housewife	2M: 17, 20, 2F: 13, 14 years
26 Nov.	William Bailey	M: 26	Labourer	Single (of Swananoa)
27 Nov.	Maria Chinnery	F: 40	Housewife	2M: 10, 7, 6F: 19, 18, 17, 15, 12, 2 years
19 Dec.	Sarah Shine	F: 39	Housewife	2F: 16, 14 years

The fact that possibly other mill workers died during this epidemic and were kept hidden within the annual report certainly suggests that Frostick and the other directors were concerned to keep the shareholders satisfied that all was going well. That the Welfare Society was established only a few months after 'Black November,' with the company investing large sums, indicates management saw a need to help workers as well as present a positive image to the public and shareholders.

The KWMCo provided £1000 for the Welfare Society (the interest from which was also to be allocated to the new body) for a number of pragmatic reasons.⁵⁶ Apart from increasing better relations between employer and employee by providing payments to those workers who were injured or too ill to work, the society's purpose was also to eliminate certain conditions that impeded the productivity of individual workers. Discipline for sick members was strict: they could not go away to another district for a change of air without the sanction of the committee, nor were they permitted to do any work, domestic or otherwise.⁵⁷ Other regulations of interest that were promoted in the Society's booklet, produced in 1920, were:

Clause 2 : The sick pay or allowance shall be 7s 6d per week per share for the first thirteen weeks, and 3s 9d per share per week for the second period of thirteen weeks.

Clause 3 : No member will draw more than twenty-six weeks' sick pay as above in any one year, but if the member's sickness continues the Committee has power to deal with same under file 2, Clause 8.

⁵⁶ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill: Welfare Society, NDF/E, *Kaiapoi Woollen Company's Employee's Welfare Fund Society, 1920*, p. 2.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 12, 13.

Clause 5 : Members receiving sick pay must remain in their homes from the hours of sunset until sunrise, except by the consent of the Committee.⁵⁸

Furthermore, two women had the job of visiting female sick members within 48 hours of being advised of illness; no mention was made of checks on sick males.⁵⁹ This last statement is noteworthy because it would appear there was an obvious demarcation in the treatment of females and males. If males were not 'checked up on' then issues of distrust of the female labour force arise which, in turn, could highlight underlying or hidden tension between management and women. Also promoted in the 1920 Annual Report under the heading 'Employees' Welfare Scheme: Valuable Medical Care' was a company objective, which was, essentially, to keep its employees (especially female) producing work:

There was good reason to believe that, by care and watching, some complaints would be eliminated altogether. Many of the employees were females ranging in age from 15 to 25 years – a period of life during which certain ailments were most prevalent. The service had already done splendid work in the treatment of goitre, neurasthenia, and anemia, to all of which young women were peculiarly liable, and in this it was doing good not only to the company's workers, but to the community as well.⁶⁰

The construction of such a passage suggests that, to the company at least, 'women's diseases' or ailments were the main reasons why female employees turned to the fund for financial assistance. The fact that men's ailments were not mentioned is significant, and the Society's gendered bias in favour of male employees may have created some tensions between management and women workers. Nevertheless, the KWMCo took great care to establish that its paternal concern extended not only to its mill employees, but to the Kaiapoi township itself. The company promoted the employees' gratitude at not only establishing such a scheme, but also providing the opportunity for workers to buy directly from the mill. Noted in the Report was Mr C. Bennett, an employee at the Kaiapoi Mill,

⁵⁸ Ibid. Clause 1: Where sickness or accident is the result of personal misconduct no claim can be made upon the funds of the Society. Clause 4: Sick pay shall not be paid for a shorter period than three days. All payments for more than three days can only be made under a Medical Officer's certificate of genuineness of the sickness. Clause 6: Any member violating the above regulations without written consent of the Committee or Secretary will be liable to forfeit all claim for further pay or to receive such less benefit from the fund as the Committee may determine. Clause 7: Individual sickness at intervals throughout any one year is to be reckoned as one continuous illness for computing sick pay, but nothing in this rule shall prevent the Committee from dealing with specially necessitous cases as the circumstances may warrant.

⁵⁹ *The Press*, 9 February 1978, p. 3

⁶⁰ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill: Documents, NDF/E, Annual Report, 22 August 1920, p. 17.

who briefly expressed to the meeting the workers' appreciation of the welfare scheme:

As a married man with four children, he would say that he had been helped very much by the arrangement under which employees were allowed to purchase goods direct. The [welfare] scheme also benefited the company, for the employees no longer felt that the company's interest in them ended when their wages were paid. Consequently, they wished to remain in the mills.⁶¹

Indeed, the 'Society' proved itself to be an effective form of benevolent company control while serving as an employee morale booster.

So successful was this form of benevolent hegemony in creating fidelity among the employees that a year later the KWMCo's directors agreed to make a further payment into the 'Welfare Fund.' In fact, the Annual Report of 1921 notes that

The anticipations of your directors with regard to this scheme have been fully maintained, and it is with the greatest pleasure and confidence that the board recommends the shareholders to agree to a further contribution of £1000 to the Employees' Welfare Reserve fund.⁶²

The 'gift' was put to good use because only two years later, during the winter of 1923, an influenza epidemic hit the mill and raised the number on sick pay to "alarming heights; leaving a debit of £97 after an expenditure over five weeks of £133."⁶³ Five years later the 'Fund' was again hit hard: "You will notice that Active members' contributions only exceeded sick payments by about £47. This was due to the influenza epidemic of July and August when we had as many as forty on the sick list at the one time."⁶⁴ A dispute between Christchurch and the Kaiapoi mills in 1925 over the number of sick claims led to a division of the Employees' Welfare Society. Thereafter, the Kaiapoi employees formed one society, and the Christchurch and Radley employees combined in the other.⁶⁵

According to J. Parr, however, company controlled benefits such as the KWMCo's 'Employees' Welfare Fund Society' served to weaken unionism. In her book *The Gender of Breadwinners*, Parr studies the politics of protection within a Canadian

⁶¹ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill: Documents, NDF/E, Annual Report, 22 August 1920, p.17.

⁶² KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill: Documents, NDF/E, Annual Report, 22 August 1921, p. 6.

⁶³ *The Press*, 9 February 1978, p. 3.

⁶⁴ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill: Sickness, NDF/E, Letter to C. Bennett from W.M.Jack, Secretary of the Welfare Society, 30 September 1927.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, Letter to C. Bennett from W.M.Jack, Secretary of the Welfare Society, 2 October 1925.

textile mill.⁶⁶ Penman's Limited was owned by John Penman, an American with strong Christian paternalist interests. His interventions, which included funding a night school for the township (Paris), the YMCA, the YWCA, the central public school, and a community nurse, created a deep sense of loyalty and personal indebtedness within the community towards him. Parr states, that Penman's philanthropy was acknowledged as compensation for the low wages paid in the mill.⁶⁷ That paternalism could serve to blind a worker to his or her employment rights is also noted by Hareven:

An identification with paternalism so pervaded the outlook of most workers that the effectiveness of the union when it did arrive was undermined. In generating an Amoskeag consciousness in the workers, paternalism delayed the development of their collective awareness as workers.⁶⁸

For the KWMCo, however, collective awareness had occurred decades before during the 'sweating' revelations, and while no more strikes were to take place, the Tailoresses' and Pressers' Union was one of the few New Zealand unions that continued to remain active (although they were never to regain the strength, during this period being studied, that they once had). While perhaps lessening its effectiveness, the KWMCo's paternalistic system did not delay the arrival of the union; in fact, an initial lack of paternal concern towards its workers during the 'sweating' period may have hastened the union's formation. Hareven goes on to state that the Amoskeag welfare program collapsed in the wake of a serious strike in 1922.⁶⁹ Only the physical amenities, the corporation housing and the playground survived. More dramatic than the disappearance of its programmes, however, was the death of the Amoskeag 'spirit,' although the elaborate paternalism of the corporation remains vivid in the minds of many former workers to the present day.⁷⁰ This is not the case for the KWMCo as its welfare programme continued steadfastly. Even after the Kaiapoi mill was closed down in 1978 there was still a strong company 'spirit'. This 'spirit' was enhanced when the 'Society's' money, left over from the company's closure, became part of a charitable trust. Called the 'Ostler Trust' after the last chairman of the Employees' Welfare Fund Society, Ben Ostler, the money was used to provide regular

⁶⁶ J. Parr, *The Gender of Breadwinners* (Toronto, University of Toronto, 1990), pp. 36,37.

⁶⁷ J.Parr, pp. 36,37.

⁶⁸ T.Hareven, 1982, p. 68.

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 62.

donations to the Kaiapoi branch of the Order of St John.⁷¹ The money was also used to provide the organisation with a building to house its ambulances. As a result, even after the mill's closure, there were still staunch feelings towards the company and the paternalistic programmes that it had in place.

The introduction of a company pension plan during the mid to late 1920s was another paternally inspired management strategy designed to ensure stability in the workforce. Like Penmans Limited of Canada, it would appear the KWMCo's pension scheme was not contributory or jointly managed by employer and employee; rather, it was managed by a pensions committee whose members were appointed by the company directors.⁷² According to Parr, Penmans Limited would, at its pleasure, grant specified payments, always for indefinite terms, to selected, long-serving employees who were no longer able to continue at the mill.⁷³ Indeed, promoted under the heading 'Non-Contributing Pension Scheme' the KWMCo's Annual Report of 1921 notes that there was one beneficiary on the funds, "an old and most trustworthy officer."⁷⁴

It gave the directors great pleasure to say, in the name of the shareholders, how delighted they were to have the opportunity to recognise such faithful service extending over a period of 40 years, and further, to express the hope that the annuitant may live for many years to enjoy a well-earned rest.⁷⁵

Typical of the employees at the Kaiapoi mill was John Capstick. When he retired at the beginning of 1930 he had been employed at the mill for 47 years and ten months and had reached 71 years of age.⁷⁶ The pensions committee had agreed that his pension was to be 15 per cent of his leaving salary, which worked out to be £6 10s 0d per month. However, because "demands on the pension fund had exceeded the income," the board of directors had included a clause stipulating that "the board may of necessity have to review his pension at any time."⁷⁷ Moreover, the stipulation allowed the withdrawal of payments during a time of financial hardship; given the effects of the Depression, any opportunity would

⁷¹ *The Kaiapoi Mail*, 10 May 1991, p. 1.

⁷² J.Parr, p. 48.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mills: Documents, NDF/E, Annual Report, 22 August 1921, p. 6.

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ MB114/A8, p. 300, Meeting of Directors, 7 February 1930. Capstick was born in 1857 and died in 1941. CM, *G.R. Macdonald Dictionary of Canterbury Biographies*, No C108.

⁷⁷ Ibid.

have been taken to save money. Nevertheless, the prospect of a pension was a considerable inducement for workers to stay on at the mill as long as possible.⁷⁸ The fact that these payments were discretionary and revocable made both ageing employees and their kin consider carefully before they hazarded their good relations with the firm.⁷⁹

Established by the company in 1919, the Employees' Committees were intended to promote closer relations between the fatherly employer and the workers. The Committees' purpose was also to liaise with the directors on behalf of the KWMCo's labourers. In July of that year and under the instructions of the president of the board of directors, company workers were invited from each factory to elect representatives to form what was initially called a Factories Committee. The duty of the committee would be to "confer with the directors, through management, in respect to any matters which, in the opinion of the workers, should be attended to arising out of their occupation."⁸⁰ Much was made of this new initiative in *Rooms of Opportunity*, the company's booklet produced in 1920 in order to recruit new workers to the mill. Here the concerned employer was again portrayed as the fatherly figure willing to listen, to act, in partnership with the labourer:

...working together through our Employees Committees with their respective managers and the Board and staff generally, we may create in the minds of the workers, as well as in our own, a feeling that work is not only necessary, but also a pleasure.⁸¹

However, either little documentary evidence was produced concerning the Employees' Committees after this early period, or much of what had been created has been lost and therefore highlights yet another problem obtaining primary sources. What evidence we do have does, nevertheless, indicate that the KWMCo was keen to provide some avenue to promote closer relations between management and workers.

⁷⁸ J.Parr, p. 48.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ MB114/A6, p. 187, Meeting of Directors, 8 July 1919.

⁸¹ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mill: Documents: NDF/E, L.S.Fanning, *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service* (1920), p. 6.

Evidence of such intentions is emphasised with the introduction of a workers' dining room in 1891 and the provision of morning tea supplies to all employees in 1919. Such benefits served to act as yet another measure of paternal interest while again promoting morale and loyalty amongst the workforce. When formally buying the property on Bedford Row in 1891 (which had been previously rented) the company also put in use a much needed dining room, which was found to "be a great boon to the employees."⁸² It is important to note at this point that the dining room's establishment may have been a result of the 'sweating' unrest only the year before. Indeed, prior to the 'sweating' revelations, the 1880s in general were, so D.Unwin states, a period when conveniences for meals were "distinctly haphazard."⁸³ Workers were not encouraged to stay on the premises for them, and those who did had their lunch at the table at which they were working or in the engine room.⁸⁴ Keen to be viewed as progressive, however, while at the same time generous to its workers, such an initiative by the KWMMCo would have only enhanced its reputation. The introduction of morning tea signalled another form of paternal generosity designed to create better relations. In July 1919, 28 years after the establishment of a company dining room, a proposal submitted for morning tea for all workers was approved: "The board has pleasure in providing it free of cost to the workers, and it is hoped that the establishment of a permanent direct link between the company and its employees will be mutually appreciated."⁸⁵ Gavin McLean notes that the "gradual amelioration of the mill worker's lot can best be traced by following the introduction of the humble 'cuppa':"⁸⁶

The first concession seems to have come at Milton in the inter-war years. It was certainly a very limited gesture, as the tea (supplied only on winter mornings) had to be consumed by the operative at his or her machine. Production very definitely came first! Oamaru and Timaru followed a little later, and it was not until the war that the mill workers began to enjoy tea-

⁸² MB114/A2, p. 4, Annual General Meeting, 23 October 1891.

⁸³ D.Unwin, 'Women in New Zealand Industry,' MA Thesis, (Dunedin, University of Otago, 1944), p. 19.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ MB114/A6, p. 188, Meeting of Directors, 8 July 1919.

⁸⁶ G.McLean, *Spinning Yarns* (Dunedin, Alliance Textiles, 1981), p. 129. Paternal generosity at the Roslyn Worsted and Woollen Mill resulted, in 1941, with the establishment "of a large and modern cafeteria." It was a building

detached from the rest of our undertaking, comprises a large dining room built to accommodate 300 persons, together with a kitchen and bakehouse fitted with all labour saving devices and modern equipment. Here a permanent staff prepares hot meals daily, while sandwiches, scones, cakes, soft drinks, ice cream, etc. are always available.

Ross and Glendinning Ltd, *The Saga of a Woollen Mill* (Dunedin, Whitcombe and Tombs, 1952), pp.2, 33.

breaks in the modern sense. Other mill facilities were equally spartan. Staff rooms were unknown and toilets were unpleasant.⁸⁷

Toilets were also unpleasant at the Kaiapoi mill, and even the directors were forced to admit this. However, unlike their Southern counterparts, the KWMCo's management attended to the problem promptly. After visiting and inspecting the mill in 1918, the chairman, J.Frostick, "characterised the arrangements at present existing as simply vile and stated it was imperative that a different system be adopted."⁸⁸ As a result the company employed a local architect to prepare plans in order to deal with the problem.⁸⁹ Nevertheless, even after improvements, the sanitary conditions left much to be desired. Margery King, a two-year mill employee during the mid-1950s, noted that when she worked at the mill the toilets were so filthy she refused to use them and would hence "have a quick trip home at the end of the day."⁹⁰ Despite this, management's concern for the health and welfare of its employees was, it would appear, genuine.

The concern of KWMCo management for the welfare of its employees is reflected in how conscientiously they dealt with both the treatment of accident victims and the official reporting of those accidents. Woollen manufacturing, both here and overseas, was an industry with an infamous record of mishaps that resulted in regular amputations or worse. For many of those maimed or injured, according to Eldred-Grigg, this meant little or no money coming in to support the family.⁹¹ Indeed, former mill employees such as Mona Capill, who lost her sight in one eye due a workplace accident in the 1950s, would agree. She notes that her compensation amounted to "stuff all...."⁹² However, prior to the 1930s the reparation policy of the KWMCo was surprisingly generous. In June 1918 the chairman reported to the board with reference to compensation for the parents of a boy recently killed at the mill. The recommendation was that the doctor's fees and funeral expenses be remunerated and that the boy's wages be paid weekly to his

⁸⁷ G.McLean, p. 129.

⁸⁸ MB114/A6, p. 95, Meeting of Directors, 4 March 1918.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ Margery King, Interview, 17 April, 2000.

⁹¹ S.Eldred-Grigg, *New Zealand Working People, 1890-1990* (Palmerston North, Dunmore Press, 1990), p.67.

⁹² M.Capill, Interview, 26 August 2001.

parents for a period of two years. This action was approved by the Board.⁹³ It is important to note at this point that in 1900, New Zealand had passed the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act which endured, with some modifications, until 1974. According to Carol Slappendel, the Act provided for payment, without the need to prove negligence, of hospital and medical expenses, and weekly compensation for workers injured at work. Some minor supplementary benefits for dependants of workers killed at work were also provided.⁹⁴ Injured workers and surviving dependants in fatal cases had the option of accepting the benefits under the Act or, where negligence could be proved, of suing the employer for common-law damages.⁹⁵ During the period studied many of the employees of the company were to resort to compensation as a result of serious injuries. Indeed, in early 1924 the chairman reported to the board that an accident had occurred at the Kaiapoi mill. L.H.Becks, an employee of the carding room, had his left hand so severely injured that it had to be amputated. The question of compensation was raised and it was found that of the full compensation of £750, 65 per cent was allowed by the (1922) Act for the loss of the left hand. This left Becks with £487 10s 0d and a letter from the board expressing their sympathy with him in his misfortune.⁹⁶ Only a few months later another employee suffered the loss of an eye in an accident at the mill. The details of the injuries were not divulged, but it was revealed that the employee was entitled to receive £337 11s 7d according to

⁹³ MB114/A6, p. 111, Meeting of Directors, 17 June 1918.

⁹⁴ C.Slappendel, *Health and Safety in New Zealand Workplaces* (Palmerston North, Dunmore Press, 1995), p. 121. For more information on Accident Compensation in New Zealand see Ian Campbell's *Compensation for Personal Injury in New Zealand: Its Rise and Fall* (Auckland, Auckland University Press, 1996), Campbell's *Legislation for Workplace Hazards in New Zealand* (Palmerston North, Faculty of Business Studies, Massey University, 1987), Campbell's *The Development of Accident Prevention in New Zealand Industries* (Palmerston North, Faculty of Business Studies, Massey University, 1979), and his *Workers Compensation Law in New Zealand* (Wellington, Sweet and Maxwell, 1964). See also the ACC's, *A Bold Experiment, Ten Years of Accident Compensation in New Zealand* (Wellington, Accident Compensation Corporation, 1984), C.Treadwell's and E.Parry's *Workers' Compensation in New Zealand* (1927), the Report of the Royal Commission of Inquiry, *Social Security in New Zealand* (Wellington, Government Print, 1972), and the Royal Commission, *Woodhouse Report* (Wellington, Government Print, 1967). See also the *New Zealand Consolidated Statutes* 'The Accident Insurance Companies Act, 1908,' Appendix D, Volume I, p. 14, and 'The Deaths by Accidents Compensation Act 1908,' Volume II, p. 31.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.121, The Act required employers (other than those exempted because of their size or strength) to insure, with an authorised insurer of their choosing, against liability to pay compensation to workers or to their dependants, for injuries of death arising out of and in the course of employment.

⁹⁶ MB114/A7, p. 231, Meeting of Directors, 1 February 1924.

the Act.⁹⁷ What would initially appear as a rash of accidents at the Kaiapoi mill was common-place in all woollen mills throughout New Zealand. With the 'safety net' of compensation, however, employees were still prepared to work in unsafe conditions.

By the 1940s the KWMMCo, like any good parent, was beginning to realise the benefits of active accident prevention. Since 1940 the woollen manufacturing industry had been required to notify the Labour Department of any accidents and their causes.⁹⁸ It would appear that many of the manufacturers did not take their notification responsibilities seriously. In an accident report sent to the Labour Department's head office in 1942, special attention was given to the fact that the Bruce mill had no accidents while the KWMMCo had 41.

Table 13

Accidents in the Woollen Mills for the Calendar Year 1941⁹⁹

Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Ltd	41
Wellington Mill	21
Lane Walker Rudkin Limited	15
Onehunga Mill	11
Timaru Worsted and Woollen Company	11
Oamaru Mill	5
Mosgiel Mill	4
Napier Mill	3
Millers Woollen Mills Rosedale Invercargill	3
Tekau Knitwear Ashburton	2
Ross and Glendining (Roslyn Mill)	1
Bruce Woollen Mill	0

It would appear, given the obvious demarcation in numbers, that the Bruce Woollen Mill, whether purposely or because of some misunderstanding, simply did not report any of its accidents, while presumably the KWMMCo informed the Department of all of theirs. It is important to note, however, that other mills were

⁹⁷ MB114/A7, p. 281, Meeting of Directors, 3 October 1924.

⁹⁸ In fact, official reporting of all general industrial accidents was not to occur until the Workers' Compensation Amendment Act 1950 which required that all incidents involving injury had to be notified, enabling better investigation of accidents and the collection of statistics and analysis of accident rates. J.Martin, *Holding the Balance* (Christchurch, Canterbury University Press, 1996), pp. 25,26.

⁹⁹ Archives New Zealand (Wellington) (from here on ANZ), Labour Department, Item Reference 1/2/76, 'Accident Reports sent to Head Office', 6 November 1942.

also probably under-reporting since at least three other manufacturers in the country had, at the time, operations (or mills) at least as large as the KWMCo and as many employees, if not more.¹⁰⁰ Unfortunately, employment figures for this period have proved elusive with only one manufacturers labour-force data available. As a result the above raw figures cannot be adjusted and shown as percentages of the workforce at each mill. Nevertheless, the accident report concluded that “mills in general hire young and inexperienced workers, [and a] lack of supervision, long periods of work, night work, poor lighting, [and] fatigue,” were all factors in accident causes.¹⁰¹ With such a large number of accident victims the KWMCo would initially seem the worst employer of all the woollen manufacturers. However, for those employees who worked for companies that must have under-reported accident rates, such managerial concealment would surely lead to feelings of distrust and under-valuation amongst the workforce. By its regular and apparently honest reporting of accident rates and their causes the KWMCo’s management proved it was taking notice of its workers. Such notice led to foremen taking steps to prevent further accidents, and in the early 1960s it led to the hiring of an occupational health nurse, one of only three in Canterbury at that time.¹⁰² While such a measure is outside the limits of this chapter, it is significant as the establishment of occupational health care serves to display the concern of management for the welfare of its employees. As an occupational health nurse, Gavin Grey noted that one of his wife’s duties was to ensure people put guards on machines and wore ear muffs.¹⁰³ It was a constant battle to enforce wearing them as it was considered easier to work on the machines without them. Sadly many employees had “suffered from hearing damage caused before she came; there was nothing done about preventing hearing damage in the early years, during her time there the object was to prevent hearing damage. It was an industrial problem.”¹⁰⁴ Indeed, the benefits of an accident prevention policy were

¹⁰⁰ Those being the Roslyn, Wellington, and Mosgiel mills. The Mosgiel Woollen Company had in 1940, 309 employees. A. Manley, ‘All Quiet on the Homefront?: The Impact of the Second World War on the Township of Mosgiel,’ MA Thesis, (Dunedin, University of Otago, 1998), p110

¹⁰¹ ANZ, Labour Department, Item Reference 1/2/76, ‘Accident Reports Sent to Head Office,’ 6 November 1942.

¹⁰² G. Grey, Interview, 12 October 2000. According to the booklet *The Saga of a Woollen Mill*, the Roslyn mill had established a health clinic “under the supervision of a fully trained nurse” in 1943. Ross and Glendinning Ltd, p.2

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

numerous; not least of which was increased trust amongst the staff towards management which would have certainly improved relations between the two groups. Moreover, a labour-force that works in a safer environment is less likely to be off work due to injury which, in turn, helps maintain a steady production rate.

Active accident prevention proved that the management and directorship of the KWMMCo had, to a certain degree, a level of social responsibility towards its worker 'children.' As a result the relationship between mill personnel and management was strengthened. Accident prevention, however, also enhanced the company's control over its workforce as management now had a reason for both supervisors and the occupational health nurse to keep a continual 'eye' on the staff. However, the philosophy of benevolent control was used to promote loyalty and morale throughout the company's personnel. The consequence of this practice was a stable labour-force that took great pride in the work it did. As the largest employer in town, even after the establishment of the freezing works; the Kaiapoi mill provided for families, especially during harsh financial times, regular paid employment. The company's paternalistic policies also served to strengthen family bonds by providing a physical and emotional identifying force within the Mill. Indeed, town citizens identified themselves with it whether they worked for the mill or not.

*Chapter Six: Epilogue: End of an Era
1942-1978*

Following the period covered by surviving minute books, that is, 1883-1942, the KWMCo was to face a series of events that were to have serious consequences for both the business and social history of the company. The 1940s saw the KWMCo flourish with soaring production and high demand thanks to the war. In order to supply its armed forces the government had turned to the manufacturing sector.¹ Woollen milling was classed as an essential industry, having an important role in the production of material for battledress, greatcoats, underwear and blankets.² However, some have argued that such concentration on military production meant that New Zealand woollen manufacturers could not keep up with overseas industrial improvements concerning the civilian market. The downturn in woollen manufacturing throughout the country during the early 1950s created further difficulties for the KWMCo. Record imports of synthetic fibres, import restrictions on machinery necessary for the industry to remain competitive on the world market and sudden price rises for raw wool which drastically affected production costs, all played a part in weakening the company's stand on the competitive market. After the late 1950s and early 1960s saw a short-lived revival in the woollen industry, with the company making comfortable profits, the manufacturing sector was again hit hard with a serious downturn in the world's demand for wool. In order to strengthen its standing in New Zealand given the tough conditions the industry was facing, the KWMCo merged with an old rival in late 1962, the Wellington Woollen Company Limited, changing its name to the Kaiapoi Petone Group Textiles Limited (from here on the KPGT). For many who worked at the Kaiapoi mill the merger was seen as the 'beginning of the end' for the company possibly because any resulting department closures and job losses were within a short period and its effects were more personal. Nevertheless, the entire woollen industry was feeling the consequences of the downturn in the world's woollen economy. A government enquiry was set up in 1968 to establish the seriousness of the situation and offer recommendations to the Minister of Industries and Commerce in order to alleviate

¹ A.Manley, 'All Quiet on the Home Front?': The Impact of the Second World War on the Township of Mosgiel,' MA Thesis, (Dunedin, University of Otago, 1998), p. 81.

some concerns here in New Zealand. Despite all of these concerns, however, each individual problem was not severe enough to bring about the downfall of the company. Nonetheless, by the time the Mosgiel Woollen Company Limited merged with the KPGT in 1972 the entire raft of problems dating from the Second World War had virtually broken its back. Bringing to the fore employee comments on the mergers and eventual closure of the mill in 1978 allows us to gain some insight into how important the Kaiapoi mill was to the workers. Indeed, the fact that so many workers saw the closure of the mill as the end of an era, is conveyed by the depth of emotion of the workers interviewed emphasising a personal relationship that was something more than economic.

While the company faced record production during the war period, resulting in the highest employment figures ever for the Kaiapoi mill, the war also caused serious difficulties concerning the production of civilian lines and the introduction of new manufacturing techniques from abroad. Despite this, according to many reports, the Second World War injected new life into the woollen mills of New Zealand. Following on the heels of the Depression, the ceaseless demand for production and labour meant this period proved to be the company's greatest success. Indeed, at the height of the war the Kaiapoi mill employed over 700 people.³ As explained in Chapter Four, many women in the district were 'manpowered' to the mill in order to keep up with the enormous military demand; the long hours worked meant not only more money in the pockets of those women, but a new sense of independence for many who had not been in paid employment before.⁴ The KWMMCo booklet produced in 1959 states the outbreak of the war found all of the company's manufacturing units in the "peak of condition and more than equal to the great demands which were to be made upon them in the next vital years" thanks to the continuous development that took place at both the Kaiapoi woollen mill and Radley hosiery mill prior to the war.⁵ Indeed, such modern mechanisation of plant meant the KWMMCo's mills produced vast quantities of manufactured goods for the

² A. Manley, p. 81.

³ *North Canterbury News*, 25 July 1978, p.3.

⁴ See Chapter 4, p. 136.

⁵ Christchurch Public Library (from here on CPL), New Zealand Collection, *A Policy of Continuous Development Keeps Kaiapoi in the Forefront of Industry in N.Z.: The Kaiapoi*

military. The following are the total quantities of the principal products supplied to the Armed forces:

Table 14

**Principal Military Products Supplied by the KWMCo
During the Second World War.⁶**

From the Kaiapoi Mill:	
Battledress and Uniform Cloth	899,200 yards
Flannel Shirting	490,800 yards
Blankets	130,184 pairs
From Radley Hosiery Mill:	
Socks and stockings	793,788 pairs
Knitted Vests	265,668 garments
Knitted Shorts	229,776 garments
Jerseys	104,280 garments
Cardigans	3,966 garments
From the Company's Clothing Factories	
Army Battledress	55,623 suits
Naval Coats	8,298 garments
Other Uniforms for the Forces	8,731 suits

According to the booklet many other lines of goods were manufactured also, but in smaller quantities.⁷ However, while the military demand for woollen manufactures soared it did so at the expense of the civilian market. A report in the *NZ Financial Times* noted that during the war period 80 per cent of New Zealand's production was devoted to military materials such as battledress cloth and blankets, this in itself, while bringing long production runs, held up the development of the industry and impeded its ability to compete with changes that had come about in factories abroad supplying civilian requirements.⁸ Most members of the patriotic public were less than willing to complain about the severe lack of woollen product, but

Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited (Christchurch, The Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited, 1959), p.3.

⁶ Ibid

⁷ *A Policy of Continuous Development Keeps Kaiapoi in the Forefront of Industry in N.Z.*, p. 4.

⁸ ANZ, IC, 1, 9/13, 'New Zealand's Woollen Industry and its Problems (II),' *NZ Financial Times*, (December 1957), p.95.

such silence allowed the problem to continue. Newsome states that ongoing high demand led clothing rationing to be retained until late 1947.⁹

Import restrictions that made the acquisition of new machinery difficult further hampered the New Zealand Woollen industry, including the KWMCo, following the war. In an unfortunate addition to the industry's problems, the cost of raw materials rose sharply and overall production costs soared to what Winsome Ross called a high level.¹⁰ This was not the only concern; in 1951 wool consumption world-wide dropped 14 per cent as synthetics became available at competitive prices.¹¹ Moreover, Newsome states that the post-war industry in New Zealand faced considerable concern due to the disruption of skilled labour and new job opportunities with more attractive conditions, which led to a decline in the workforce to 2,670 in 1947-48 compared to 4,050 in 1943-44.¹² Despite the difficulties of introducing new machinery into the country, high demand led to wool piece goods being freed from import restriction in March 1951. While overall, the value of total Kaiapoi mill production showed some increase over the years 1951-52, 1952-53, and 1953-54, forward orders placed with the mill in 1955 showed an alarming decline.¹³ Unfortunately, the freedom of import control had an immediate dampening effect on the industry, especially as wool prices, stimulated by the Korean War, were now beginning to rise. Imports flooded into the country, and by October 1955, when licensing was re-imposed, the industry was literally 'on its knees', suffering from a depression in the midst of a general economic boom.¹⁴

⁹ M.J.Nesome, 'Factors in the Development and Location of the Woollen Textile Industry in New Zealand,' MA Thesis, (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1967), p. 35.

¹⁰ W. Ross, 'Textile Mill Closure and the Small Town: The Case of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill 1971-1980,' Research Essay, (Wellington, Victoria University, 1980), pp. 9,10.

¹¹ A.J. Robb, 'Mosgiel Limited – Cash Flows and Life Events', Working Paper Number 3/86, Unpublished Essay, (Christchurch, Department of Accountancy, University of Canterbury), p. 1.

¹² M.J.Nesome, p. 35.

¹³ ATL, MS Group 0497, New Zealand Woollen Mills Industrial Union of Workers, ACC 94-106-46/07, 'The Woollen Mill Industry in New Zealand', Industry and Survey Section, Department of Industries and Commerce, (1956), p.77. Import licensing was re-imposed from 29 October 1955.

¹⁴ M.J.Nesome, p. 35.

It could be stated somewhat glibly that the Kaiapoi woollen mill had both its growth and its modernisation curtailed by the general economic conditions of the woollen industry. Indeed, any price rise for raw wool would naturally have impacted on the profitability of woollen mills. In the case of the Kaiapoi woollen mill this meant that the cost of production rose to an almost unsustainable level.¹⁵ As stated, these costs inevitably meant cutting back in areas such as modernisation of plant, something on which many of those interviewed commented. Indeed, mill weaver Elaine Dickson mentioned that much of the Kaiapoi mill's machinery was old and out of date.¹⁶ Even after the drop in wool prices in the mid 1950s and the consequent drop in production costs for the mill, the Board could not obtain the machinery that would maintain the company's competitive edge in both the domestic and export markets because of government restrictions on machinery importation.¹⁷ In spite of these problems the mill continued to employ a large majority of the Kaiapoi labour force, and, under the experienced managership of G.Greenwood, it did record growth. Part of that growth was a consolidation of the export markets that the company traded in before the war. Wood notes that a goodwill visit to the mill by the deputy Prime Minister of Canada, the Right Honourable C.D. Howe, in the course of his seven day mission to New Zealand in April 1955, probably helped in that respect.¹⁸ Howe was accompanied by the permanent head of the Canadian Trade and Commerce Department, W.F. Bull. At the end of their tour of the mill the Canadians were given a lasting reminder of their visit in the form of Kaiapoi travelling rugs.¹⁹

The economic woes the Kaiapoi mill encountered throughout the 1950s were compounded in the 1960s by management problems.²⁰ A.J. Robb suggests that the loss of a long-term and effective manager/leader can lead to stress amongst the employees and create uncertainty about the future of the company.²¹ The long period of management under George Greenwood came to an end in February 1959.

¹⁵ P.Wood, *Kaiapoi a Search for Identity* (Rangiora, Waimakariri District Council, 1993), pp. 314, 315.

¹⁶ E.Dickson, Interview, 21 October 2000.

¹⁷ P. Wood, p. 315.

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Ibid., pp. 314, 315.

²⁰ Ibid, p. 346.

²¹ A.J. Robb, p. 18.

He was succeeded by Kingsley Harrison who was, according to Woods, to be the last mill manager of the Kaiapoi Woollen mills.²² Harrison, it was stated, was of the same mould as Greenwood, strict and experienced, a man who demanded respect. However, during the same period many of the old guard directors were passing on. William R. Carey, general manager of the company since 1927 and a director since 1942, died in 1958.²³ A year later Denys Hoare, a director for over 18 years, also died; this was followed by the death of J.H Rhodes, a director of the company since 1937 and chairman of the Board since 1942.²⁴ Often these directors were being replaced with those who either lacked experience or knew little of the company. Management was facing the same problem. Many employees complained that management was inexperienced; their resentment was enhanced when the company insisted on employing not local people, but Englishmen to take the place of those supervisors that had worked for years building and strengthening ties between management and worker. Ivan Monk remarked that “quality dropped towards the end of the mill, sometimes they would bypass guys that had worked there all their lives and give it [a manager’s job] to some bloody overseas bugger and half the time he wouldn’t know what type of machines they were.”²⁵ John McDonald agrees; when asked “What were the bosses like?” he replied,

They were bosses – we didn’t exist. A lot of English people worked there. I can remember in our department [Carding], they brought out this man from England to run our department, we had to teach him his job! He’d been a postman in England before he came out. We were only the Kiwis. Even if he’d just been a postman, we had to teach him the job. He took over as manager of the Department. Awful lot of English people – most of them are still here.²⁶

The imposition of English management upon the workforce increased levels of antipathy and lowered morale during a period when the company was facing unprecedented levels of competition from both at home and abroad, a period when the company could ill afford internal conflict.

²² P.Wood, p. 346.

²³ HL, Sligo Brothers: Kaiapoi Petone Group Textiles Limited: 165, Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited, Annual Report, 19 July 1958.

²⁴ HL, Sligo Brothers, 165, Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Ltd, Annual Report, 19 July 1959, and 19 July 1960.

²⁵ I.Monk, Interview, 30 January 2001.

²⁶ J.McDonald, Interview, 17 April 2000.

The competition of man-made fibres had always proved to be a thorn in the side of the country's woollen industry; however, in the 1960s such competition, especially in the garment fields where short runs were uneconomic, was causing serious concern, especially for the company. Yet the realisation amongst the industry of the need for wool mixes had come at least a decade earlier:

The end-products of the mills usually include what are termed in the trade men's and women's fancy suitings, trouserings, overcoatings, gaberdine, tartans, sports coatings, flannel shirtings and trouserings, fingering and machine knitting wools, blankets, rugs and special cloths such as upholstery and bowling mats. The mills also produce mixtures of wool and rayon, wool and nylon and wool and terylene; it may be that if wool continues to be high in price and artificial fibres become cheaper, the woollen mills will have to swing over more to the production of mixtures in order to meet production trends and competition from abroad.²⁷

This change of direction was something that the KWMCo was never keen to do. Its reputation was renowned not only for the quality of its product, but also because that product was 100 per cent pure wool. Nevertheless, despite its misgivings Ngaire McNicholl states the company started using a synthetic mix (the synthetic was probably cashmilion) in a product titled 'Golden Fleece' during the late 1960s.²⁸ This rather drastic change in policy was made in an attempt to keep up with the rest of the world's woollen industry.

While the early 1960s indicate the KWMCo was in fact making a profit, it was obvious by the mid to late 60s that the entire industry was in serious trouble. In response the government launched a ministerial enquiry, but not until strong pressure was brought by the New Zealand Textile and Woollen Mills Association. At a meeting of the organisation in February 1968 it was advised that it would be "worth trying to see the minister [of Industries and Commerce] again to bring to his attention the further deterioration of the industry."²⁹ Their determination was rewarded. With some firms down to single shifts a day it was agreed that woollen manufacturers were in strife. In order to find the extent of the problem the minister

²⁷ ANZ, IC, 1, 9/13, *N.Z. Financial Times*, (December 1957), p. 95.

²⁸ N. McNicholl, Interview, 7 April 2001. This claim is supported by Albe Capill a former mill employee who states that the company started using a wool-nylon mix in the 1960s. 26 August 2001.

²⁹ ATL, MS Group 0541, New Zealand Manufacturers Federation, 'New Zealand Woollen Mills Association' (Minutes of), ACC 92-105, Box 36, Minutes of a Meeting of the New Zealand Textile and Woollen Mills Association, 20 February 1968, p. 1.

set up an enquiry.³⁰ The findings of the 'Report of the Committee' (1969) were varied.³¹ Within the previous decade expenditure by the mills in re-equipping and expansion had been approximately \$25 million; however, the industry was facing uncertainty about its future.³² This had been caused by the shifting economic situation, the varying degree of protection afforded by import licensing and the tariff, and the sharp downturn throughout the world in demand for wool textiles in 1967 and the first half of 1968 which caused a corresponding drop in profitability of the wool textile industry in New Zealand. For all these reasons modernisation and expansion had slowed:

The industry, being based on wool, has to carry heavy stocks as the particular types of wool it requires are only available at short periods during the season and bank finance for this has been difficult to obtain in the past 2 years. Again, due to uncertainty and the general lack of support for the wool textile industry within New Zealand, mills have not been able to raise finance through normal channels as easily as have other industries.³³

Such a lack of funds would also seriously hamper any attempt to modernise the industry and, in turn, keep up with world trends.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ 'Report of Committee of Inquiry to the Minister of Industries and Commerce,' *New Zealand Woollen and Associated Textile Milling Industry* (Wellington, 1969), p. 9. According to the enquiries findings there were 12 companies operating 20 units in the textile milling operations in New Zealand. Six of these companies were vertically integrated covering the woollen or worsted process from carding to weaving [and in some cases, as with the Kaiapoi mill, scouring]. In 1966-67 the value of production was \$25.5 million and added value was \$13.1 million. In 1968 the mills produced 22,106,000 lb of yarn including carpet yarn and 3,586,000 square yards of piece goods. They employed 4,514 employees of whom 2,045 were female.

The Report also states that in the decade previous to the enquiry there was considerable amount of reorganisation within the industry. This commenced in 1960 when Timaru Worsted and Woollen Mills Limited and Oamaru Worsted and Woollen Mills Limited merged to form Alliance Textiles Limited. Following this in 1964 Alliance Textiles made a successful takeover bid for the Burce Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited. The Report also discusses the merger of the Kaiapoi and Wellington companies and the Petone plants close down in 1967. One new company had entered the textile milling field in the 1960s. This was U.E.B. Industries Limited, which took over Ross and Glendining Limited and Napier Woollen Mills Limited. As a result of these developments the Napier plant was closed and a new carpet yarn spinning plant established at Awatoto. After the Committee commenced its deliberations a further merger was accomplished when the Roslyn Mills Division of U.E.B. Textiles Limited and the Mosgiel Woollens Limited, merged in early 1969. p.33

³² 'Report of Committee of Inquiry to the Minister of Industries and Commerce', p.37

³³ Ibid.

While many recommendations were made within the Report very few were of any great significance, and others were often wide sweeping and generalised, suggesting the creation of management trainee programmes, greater education for prospective management trainees, and employing more highly qualified designers at higher salaries. Nonetheless, there was a serious attempt to recognise and solve the 'core' problems the industry faced. One suggestion was that some form of textile export body be set up in conjunction with the Department of Industries and Commerce, the textile mills, and other wool producing and processing interests.³⁴ Another, was that the "government examine in detail the social implications and desirability of removing the present restrictions which apply to the employment of female labour after 10 pm."³⁵ It was recognised that as some of the recommendations could involve heavy financial costs, the government give consideration to assisting mills by allowing the expenses incurred to be treated for income tax purposes in similar fashion to export promotion expenditure.³⁶ An action such as this would make the likelihood of implementing the recommendations more probable and hopefully alleviate some of the problems of the woollen manufacturers.

Many mill employees blamed the KWMCo's eventual downfall on its merger with the Wellington Woollen Company in December 1962. The merger came about as a direct result of the difficulties faced by the industry during the late 1940s to the early 1960s. Competition was fierce and it was felt that a merger between the two well established woollen manufacturing firms would give a stronger competitive edge over the New Zealand market. The KWMCo's annual reports for the financial years 1961 and 1962 show that the company was still making comfortable profits. Despite a serious shortage of skilled labour in 1961, sales of the company's products had, in fact, increased by ten per cent over the previous year's level in the face of "keen competition."³⁷ The net profit for the year, after providing £44,000 for depreciation and £57,566 for taxation, amounted to £56,258,

³⁴ 'Report of Committee of Inquiry to the Minister of Industries and Commerce,' pp. 16, 17.

³⁵ Ibid.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ HL, Item UN-21, Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited, Annual Report, 19 July 1961.

to which was to be added the balance brought forward from the 1960 accounts of £57,139, making available for appropriation a total of £113,397.³⁸ The 1962 report noted that the manufacturing plants were operating at a high level of output and efficiency, the latter resulting largely from a somewhat better availability of suitable staff. As a consequence of these conditions, a net profit of £65,041 had been earned, after providing for taxation. This represented an improvement of £8,783 on the previous year's result.³⁹ Such profits strengthened the likelihood of a merger since Wellington would have been less than willing to amalgamate with a company that was making a loss. Changing the new company's name to Kaiapoi Petone Group Textiles Limited was one of the first measures taken, although such an action would naturally have caused consternation among those workers and customers of the old KWMC who grew up with and, indeed, financially supported the much loved institution. At the time the two companies merged, Ross notes they employed between them 500 workers in Wellington and Kaiapoi.⁴⁰ However, she does not state how many workers were being employed in the Christchurch factories and Radley mill, which could also have reached a combined total in the hundreds. Since the KPGT based its head office in Christchurch the likelihood of city workers losing their factory jobs may have initially been lessened. Nevertheless, the fears of Kaiapoi mill workers were increased with the closure of the worsted carding and combing sections in 1963 which meant all processing of raw material was ended. All yarn had to be obtained from Mosgiel and Roslyn mills.⁴¹ Kaiapoi now specialised in scouring, topmaking, knitting yarns and blankets. Petone dropped its wool scouring capabilities, and specialised in worsted spinning and weaving from Kaiapoi tops. Kaiapoi also supplied a large number of tops to other companies.⁴² Ivan Monk states that when Kaiapoi and Petone merged,

well, that was the beginning of the end of everything. Once that happened it was never the same mill again. Once we got tied up with Petone, political, the

³⁸ HL, Item UN-21, Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited, Annual Report, 19 July 1961

³⁹ HL, Sligo Brothers, 165, Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited, Annual Report, 19 July 1962.

⁴⁰ W.Ross, p. 10.

⁴¹ *North Canterbury News*, 25 July 1978, p.3.

⁴² M.J.Newsome, p. 78.

whole thing was political, we just went down hill. This mill should have never have closed down.⁴³

The closure of particular sections in the Kaiapoi mill and, indeed, the demise of the company's name may have signalled to some workers and customers the 'beginning of the end,' for when the Kaiapoi mill eventually closed down many of the former employees traced its downfall to the merger.

The merger, however, was not a predetermined catalyst to the company's demise. The company's slide, it could be argued, occurred for many different reasons. Indeed, A.J. Robb points to various and, often at first glimpse, inconsequential, reasons that can lead to the collapse of a mature company.⁴⁴ The paper suggests that mature companies do not collapse overnight,

but follow a trajectory which indicates that failure can be seen a number of years prior to the appointment of a receiver or liquidator... [the paper] describes the failure pattern as being an initial collapse, a plateau, and a final collapse. The plateau may be lengthy but the final collapse occurs quickly.⁴⁵

Robb describes the initial collapse as occurring between Points 1 and 5 and the final collapse from points 12 to 15. These are defined as follows:

- Point 1 Financial health has been and remains good to excellent with turnover rising soberly in real terms, profit margins good, gearing low, morale good.
- Point 2 Several defects in the management structure exist; one-man rule, chairman-chief executive, an unbalanced top team, non-participating board, lack of management depth or weak finance function.
- Point 3 Certain defects are noted in the accounting information systems including inadequate budgetary control, no updated cash flow forecasts.
- Point 4 Although a major change has occurred – such as a merger of two competitors or the company's first strike – no adequate response has been made.
- Point 5 Two things go wrong together – the company either overtrades or launches a big project which fails, and a normal business hazard occurs.
- Point 6 Profits fall severely.
- Point 7 The financial ratios deteriorate.
- Point 8 Morale falls and other non-financial symptoms appear.
- Point 9 Profits have still not recovered even though it may be one or two years after Point 5.

⁴³ I. Monk, Interview, 30 January 2001.

⁴⁴ A.J. Robb, pp. 3, 4.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

- Point 10 Creative accounting begins, partly because the managers realise they need a large loan.
- Point 11 Gearing increases, interest takes a larger part of profits, and the company has lost its competitive edge.
- Point 12 Profits level out after falling, but at a volume that does little more than cover interest payments.
- Point 13 The managers either launch a new ambitious project (a diversification or a merger with a smaller company) or launch a campaign to expand sales from existing facilities.
- Point 14 Sales and profits rise, and additional finance is obtained.
- Point 15 A repeat of Point 5 occurs – the project runs into trouble or sales are ahead of the capital available to finance them or a pressure group applies a constraint or a new normal business hazard occurs.
- Point 16 The company collapses.⁴⁶

However, it is stated that there are a number of difficulties with this type of analysis, autocratic leadership is reported as a vice, without extolling its possible virtues; another difficulty is that it is often not clear when there is an ‘unbalanced top team,’ ‘one-man rule,’ ‘a weak finance function,’ or ‘morale falls.’ Robb then goes on to state that it is not always clear what is ‘creative accounting’ “given the imprecision of basic accounting concepts such as financial position, assets, liabilities, and funds from operations.”⁴⁷ The fact that Point 4 can be directly associated with the KWMCo’s situation did not necessarily mean the company’s demise was imminent. However, the accumulation of other points within the list could certainly be attributed to its eventual closure. Ross notes that between the merger with Wellington and the merger with Mosgiel (the company that was eventually responsible for the mill’s closure), a period of ten years, there were some areas of over-productive capacity of plant coupled with increasing cost of labour and raw materials, and such situations could correlate with Point 5.⁴⁸ Indeed, aside from Point 3, for which there is no available evidence, points 1 – 5 mirror the situation faced by the Kaiapoi company. Points 10 – 14, to a degree, also match the experience of the company.

While newspaper reports like that of July of 1972 note that the now named KPGT was to merge with the Mosgiel Woollen Company in the same year, many believe the company was the subject of a takeover.⁴⁹ Indeed, very few sources call the

⁴⁶ A.J.Robb, p. 4.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 5.

⁴⁸ W.Ross, p.10.

⁴⁹ *The Press*, 27 July 1972, p.26.

action a merger; certainly those interviewed consider it an act of aggression by Mosgiel. This feeling was emphasised when Mosgiel began laying people off:

Well we were put off of course. That's when the mill went through, well that must have been when I left. They only kept certain parts of it open, they bought a great big machine out from Germany to cut down on people doing their... [work], but they didn't know how to put it together when they got here. They had to bring a man out from Germany, it was just thousands of dollars... a waste of money. It kept breaking down and all sorts of things. Where one person was supposed to work it would take four of us to finish the job. The place was never kept up as the years went by, it was so old fashioned, the machinery and things like that, and of course hard times came, and of course it... packed up in the finish.⁵⁰

Elaine Dickson's memories also reflect a strong sense of dissatisfaction once the Kaiapoi mill was being managed from Mosgiel. Looking back, she identified the lack of modernisation and mismanagement as signs of the mill's eventual closure. Robb states that the Mosgiel Company Limited had "*taken them over* for 20c cash and 23c in "B" debentures at 8% for each 50c Kaiapoi share. Mosgiel issued long term bills payable totalling \$800,000 to raise the cash necessary for the purchase of the Kaiapoi shares. Repayments commenced in the 1974 year." (my emphases)⁵¹ The management of Mosgiel then began closing down a number of the operations acquired from Kaiapoi. Naturally morale sank to an all time low. Ivan Monk reveals the hostility felt by many:

Well, it's the old story, Mosgiel was the boss, they stripped machinery and they [said] they weren't going to close this down and they weren't going to close the weaving flat down and everything else, but hey that was just to keep us all sweet. The whole thing just collapsed.

What was the general mood?

It's a bit like getting married. If your father marries another woman and brings home two or three kids, you know, they are your step-brothers and sisters, but they're not your brothers and sisters, you know what I mean. Mosgiel was the same. To the average Joe Bloggs they were only interested in collecting a wage.⁵²

Nonetheless, despite the apparent ease in depicting the Mosgiel Company as the heartless villain, firing loyal Kaiapoi employees, and taking their famous product as their own, factory closures and layoffs had been occurring before the 1972 merger. One article in *The Press* in March of that year describes how "Kaiapoi

⁵⁰ Elaine Dickson, Interview, 21 October 2000.

⁵¹ A.J. Robb, p. 2.

⁵² I. Monk, Interview, 30 January 2001.

Textiles Limited, will close its factories at Timaru and Burnham at the end of this month, will cut by half the staffing of its factory in Allen Street, Christchurch, and will reduce by nearly one-third the staffing of its Hornby factory.”⁵³ The article also goes on to state that the manager of the company, R.R.Gilchrist, said that his company’s measures were directed towards improving liquidity. In addition to reducing the number of factory sites, the company was discontinuing the production of a considerable range of products where the selling prices had not been sufficient to recover the heavy cost increases, particularly in wage rates and payroll tax, incurred over the previous year.⁵⁴ At the beginning of 1972 Kaiapoi textiles began closing down its Radley factory in Christchurch. This meant the dismissal of about 100 workers and the transfer of another 100 to other premises, and although there was no declared redundancy at the Kaiapoi woollen mill, dismissals and resignations over the previous year reduced staff by 117.⁵⁵ The report goes on to state, tellingly: “when the present reorganisation has been completed, another 32 workers will have been laid off in Timaru, 13 in Hornby, and about 70 in Christchurch. No further reduction in staff is planned.”⁵⁶ Sadly this assurance was meaningless, but the report does indicate that many of the job losses had begun before the Mosgiel Company merged with the KPGT.

While many of those interviewed seemed less than enthusiastic to talk about the Mosgiel Company Limited’s merger with Kaiapoi or of the eventual demise of the KPGT, their physical response to questions raised about these issues often spoke volumes. Indeed, the eventual closure of the mill in 1978 produced a myriad of feelings including grief and anger. Edward (Ted) Bland began working for the company in the early 1960s and continued there for at least 15 years. When asked “How did you respond to the closure?” he replied very glumly: “Not very well – not very well.”⁵⁷ Resentment towards those who were responsible for the closure naturally boiled to the surface when asked, “Do you remember what the workers’ response was?”

Well there was a lot of people there! There was quite a few of them there and that was the only job they’d ever had, so it was a major blow to em. Like

⁵³ *The Press*, 10 March 1972, p. 1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ E.Bland, Interview, 17 April 2000.

being hit by a bloody truck really. There was lots of people there who'd been there 45 years – that's a long time. There was one joker that worked there – he was leaving, he'd been working there since he left school at about 14 and they told him one day that they wanted him to go up to the office to get presented he scratched his head, he'd been there for 45 years, "Where is the office?" – that whole time he never knew.⁵⁸

Ngarie McNicholl, on the other hand, cried when she recalled the events that she now associates with a death in the family,

Very sad. I remember the day that we closed... I'll never forget the people.... There was a hell of a lot of people in Kaiapoi that started there as kids and worked there all their lives, built a home, raised a family and have seen their kids through it. So you can imagine...I can see them standing around.... It was a kick in the guts to people. We were losing a lot of people that we knew in our heart of hearts that would never be employed again. People that gave to that mill loyally, and ok it was a mundane job that they were doing, but somebody had to do it in the industry and they were valued people, very valued people. There wasn't much left in town that could employ them. That was sad. I remember the day that my late boss said "like general McArthur, we will return." We knew it wouldn't happen. It was sad. I was there when they turned the machines off – it was like a death. Honestly, it was like a death, it was so quiet.⁵⁹

The strength of the interviewees' feelings serve to emphasise the emotional as well as economic importance the workers placed upon the mill.

The end of the company was not the end for the Kaiapoi Woollen mill buildings, however, nor did it lead to the much feared demise of the township. Winsome Ross notes that during the 1970s there was no breakdown of unemployment statistics made by the Christchurch Regional Employment Office (Kaiapoi was part of the whole Christchurch Employment Area).⁶⁰ Consequently, "there is not an estimate available for how many people were unemployed in Kaiapoi or whether there has been an increase in [unemployment] numbers over the past decade [since the mill's

⁵⁸ E.Bland, Interview, 17 April 2000. In June 1977, Mosgiel announced it was going to close the Kaiapoi mill over the next two years. Kaiapoi then had 169 workers, mostly women. Rising costs, inflation, and technological developments were cited as reasons for the closure. For example, improvements of the past 40 years produced machinery which used about a quarter of the room required for the machinery at the Kaiapoi mill. 'The Social and Economic Impact of the Collapse of Mosgiel Limited on the Towns of Ashburton and Mosgiel,' Business Development Centre, (Dunedin, University of Otago, 1981), pp. 19, 20.

⁵⁹ N. McNicholl, Interview, 30 January 2001.

⁶⁰ W.Ross, p.32.

closure].”⁶¹ Ross concludes that the mill’s closure did not have as serious an impact upon unemployment levels as was first anticipated.⁶² Although, she does go on to state that the reduction to one income families, with many women leaving the labour force, as well as increased travelling time and costs, since many now worked in Christchurch were more subtle effects of the closure.⁶³ It was certainly unlikely that all former employees still of a working age would have been able to find employment in Kaiapoi. As McNicholl points out: “The only other major employer in town would have been the freezing works.” Still, fears of high unemployment levels in Kaiapoi appear not to have been realised. Doubts, however, arose concerning the viability of the mill buildings soon after the closure was announced. Various suggestions including using the mill site as a rubbish disposal plant, were put forward. Such propositions gained little ground especially as finding a new owner for the mill buildings was proving difficult. In September 1979 the Mosgiel Woollen Company had agreed to sell the mill buildings to the Kaiapoi Borough Council.⁶⁴ Asking for a price between \$500,000 and \$700,000, Mosgiel it would appear expected a quick sale.⁶⁵ Their expectations were not fulfilled; the council procrastinated due to the fact that they wanted to ensure ratepayer approval in order to raise a loan to buy the buildings and that they would not proceed until they were sure that they could lease out at least eighteen hundred square metres of floor space at the mill. This in turn meant the Mosgiel Company was forced to announce that the mill would be auctioned.⁶⁶ Again they could not reach a sale and it was not until July 1980 that the mill buildings gained new economic life when the Shivas Family Trust purchased them with the intention of leasing sections to small business. By 1991 independent businesses operating at the mill had swelled to 25 and employed a total of 350 people. The thousands of square metres of space are now used for warehousing as well as the tenant businesses.⁶⁷ One former mill worker stated: “When the mill went through they said that Kaiapoi would be a little side town, but look how it’s thrived.”⁶⁸

⁶¹ W.Ross, p.4.

⁶² Ibid., pp. 42, 43.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ P.Wood, p. 399.

⁶⁵ Ibid.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ *The Kaiapoi Mail*, 10 May 1991, p. 3.

While some mill workers have argued that the downfall of the company that had put Kaiapoi on the world map came as a result of the merger with Wellington, it would appear a series of events had combined to weaken the company to such an extent that it could no longer survive on its own, hence the eventual agreement to merge with Mosgiel. While a lack of interest or ability in the younger and less experienced management, difficulty in keeping up with innovative technological advancements, vastly increased competitive products from overseas, and a general economic downturn in the world of woollen manufacturing were important factors, they were not individually serious enough to ensure the company's demise.

However, that all these factors emerged within less than three decades often meant the company was either dealing with one crisis after another, or two or three at a time. When the company merged with Mosgiel, little, save a miracle, could have saved the business, the mill, and employee jobs. The frustration felt by workers during this period was intense. Even more intense was the emotion displayed by many of the Kaiapoi workers at the mill's closure. While the closure of the mill created fears for the survival of the town, it also created feelings of loss, depression and anger, sentiments that are still present to this day.

⁶⁸ E. Dickson, Interview, 21 October 2000.

Conclusion

Wool exports and woollen manufacturing in New Zealand's economy have been so important throughout European settlement that it is surprising there is so little scholarly research on the subject. The introduction to this thesis noted that most of the published works about woollen mills were written from a particular perspective, such as celebrating a centenary, rather than being academic studies; most had a narrow focus on the individual business and ignored the mill or factory's significance to its district. Most local histories in New Zealand merely mention the existence of a woollen mill in a locality without exploring either its business history or the importance of the mill for the local community.

This thesis has attempted to remedy these deficiencies with respect to one major woollen mill and its parent company, the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company. Rather than confine the study to the model of a business history, merely summarising successive minute books and annual financial statements, this thesis has combined the elements of a business history, an enterprise history, and a social history, and has attempted to assess the firm's importance in its local, regional and national contexts.

Examination of the policies practised by the company was vital in order to understand not only aspects of its business and enterprise history, but its social history also. Concentrating on Gordon, Edwards and Reich's theory of *homogenisation* in North American industry and putting it in the context of a local New Zealand woollen manufacturer, we can see one policy practised by company management was the 'drive' system. Direct supervision or machine pacing to 'drive' workers not only helped maintain cost effective labour production, but fostered a strengthening control over production workers. However, the strict conditions involved with such a system created a very high labour turnover rate, especially within the city factories. Moreover, in its ongoing drive to maintain low costs the KWMCo risked serious tensions between management and staff. Labour relations were to suffer their worst blow in 1889-1890 when the company was accused of 'sweating practices.' Management intransigence concerning the

acceptance of sweating accusations made by union members resulted in two weeks of industrial action followed by total victory for the union. Subsequent acts were passed by the government to ensure working conditions in factories everywhere were improved, but relations between the KWMMCo management and its employees were to remain strained for some time.

Nonetheless, management acumen enabled the KWMMCo to expand considerably in the fifty years following its establishment in 1878. Not only was this expansion experienced nationally, but internationally as well, with branches and representatives established in Australia and Britain. By 1928 the concern's goods were being sold all over the world. Expansion of product lines and of production rate was largely due to improved technology. One of the KWMMCo's guiding principles was to maintain a constant demand for new technology and to implement such improvements in order to reduce labour and production costs. Better manufacturing techniques, due to a programme of regular modernisation of plant, also meant better quality merchandise. The company kept up-to-date with the competition and applied the most advanced advertising methods. The KWMMCo promoted its quality goods to such an extent that its name and product became renowned the world over.

With a growing reputation and a strengthening capital base, the company was able to withstand financial pressures caused by competition from synthetic products, wars, disasters and the Depression. Nevertheless, the business was not always successful in dealing with external pressures. Taxes and tariffs were to remain an ongoing issue throughout the company's history. Personal representations to ministers, while perhaps creating sympathy for the woollen industry's cause, generally met with only limited success. The political dimension, however, has not been discussed in local business histories; it is unfortunate that such an omission may have served to consolidate the lack of serious academic interest in such histories, especially those concerning the woollen industry.

The establishment of woollen manufacturing associations heralded an opportunity for members to act in a mutually protective spirit of cooperation while still remaining essentially competitive. Despite initial apprehension over price rule

breaches by some members whose overriding concern was obtaining a larger slice of the market, members such as the KWMMCo realised the benefits associated with belonging to such an organisation were too important to ignore. The KWMMCo found schemes such as price regulation, united lobbying of government over tariff issues and joint national advertising campaigns not only financially advantageous, but also beneficial to the company's reputation. Examining the competitive nature of the industry indicates that the KWMMCo was operating in a somewhat aggressive market; that it could withstand such competition while still maintaining and, indeed, enhancing its reputation is remarkable.

Another important issue concerning the company's social history was its recruitment techniques. Research in this area also included study of the KWMMCo's female employees and issues arising from gendered divisions of labour. By the early twentieth century recruiting policies for the business were well-honed and geared generally towards the establishment of a skilled British workforce base and an unskilled local one. Females were always to be the main recruitment target for the Kaiapoi mill. Unlike the Christchurch city factories where a labour supply was always at hand, the small north Canterbury township often suffered labour shortages, especially of females. In order to counter this problem the company would specifically seek workers from Britain in order to fill the employment gap. Both company-owned and YMCA and YWCA operated hostels established in Kaiapoi were utilized to entice prospective employees. One of the most important recruitment techniques used, however, was the company's very own propaganda booklet *Rooms of Opportunity*.¹ Aimed at the parents of young women, the booklet's task was to seek parental support in order to increase the female labour supply at the Kaiapoi mill. However, inconsistencies abounded within the booklet. The most important was the promotion of a girl's bright future with the company, although she received less pay than her male counterpart and had no chance of 'climbing the company ladder.' It would appear the female workers' future at the mill was, in fact, perceived to be temporary, filling the gap between school and marriage, regardless of the fact that married women with children were also employed. It is unfortunate that the few business histories concentrating on the

¹ KHM, Industry: Woollen Mills: Documents, NDF/E, L.S. Fanning, *Rooms of Opportunity in the Kaiapoi Service* (1920).

woollen industry in New Zealand have chosen not to consider the female working situation at all.

Most of the business histories in this country that do mention a company's paternalistic policies hail them as evidence of management's concern for their employees; the fact that these policies were forms of benevolent control, established in order to maintain a stable workforce, has been ignored in such works. The establishment of company-owned mill houses purposely built for young couples working at the mill certainly helped recruitment, but at the same time, worker allegiance to the company became more entrenched. The mill and factory family, with company management and directorship as its parental head, was also promoted through the establishment of annual picnics, pension schemes and welfare benefits. The creation of a stable workforce was further consolidated by the KWMCo's responsible attitude towards accident reporting and prevention. Such policies and attitudes were natural morale boosters and also served to increase the workforce's loyalty towards management.

As we have seen, the KWMCo played a major part in the lives of its workers for many decades. Oral interviews with former employees indicate that much feeling still remains concerning the Kaiapoi mill's closure in 1978. Anger and resentment appear to be aimed at an inexperienced management who agreed to a merger with the Wellington Woollen Company Limited in 1962; for many, this action was seen as the 'beginning of the end' for the Kaiapoi mill, especially as the KWMCo's name was to change permanently. However, a serious lack of demand for woollen products throughout the world, rising production costs, and raw wool price rises were also to play their part in the serious difficulties the company was facing. By the time the business merged with the Mosgiel Woollen Company Limited in 1972, the problems caused by ongoing issues since the end of the Second World War were thought to be insoluble. The closure of the mill left many with feelings of bitterness and loss, emotions that are still strongly felt to this day.

While this thesis looks briefly at North American woollen manufacturers, comparing their labour policies with those of the KWMCo, comparison of the New Zealand and Australian woollen industries is worthy of further academic attention.

Given the apparent similarities between the two sheep producing nations, such a lack of scholarly work concerning woollen manufacture is surprising. Also worthwhile would be further study into manufacturers on a local scale, especially given all the primary sources for the history of the woollen industry in this country. Minute books, annual reports and balance sheets of various companies are held within archival libraries around New Zealand.

This study of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited from 1878-1978 focuses on a specific area of industry that has been given little serious academic attention in the past. Possibly the subject has been considered too limited to make a significant contribution to New Zealand history. Yet this examination of the company's success and decline shows the importance of the international as well as national context, and the impact of social, economic and political factors not only on the business but on the local community of Kaiapoi.

Glossary¹

Burling/mending	After having been woven, all pieces of cloth are carefully examined in the burling and mending department. Loose ends and knots are removed and any flaws or imperfections repaired.
Carding	Carding follows the scouring process. Here the wool is brushed by a series of revolving rollers until all forms of tufts and locks have disappeared and a complete mixing of fibres is obtained.
Carbonising	Some wools after scouring still contain a certain amount of vegetable matter and seed, therefore these particular wools are 'carbonised.' Carbonising consists of immersion in acid of certain strength, followed by drying at high temperatures. This treatment reduces the vegetable matter to carbon, which is crushed and shaken out of the wool by a dust-extracting machine. The acid is then neutralised from the wool by an alkaline immersion followed by further rinsing and drying.
Combing	The combing process under the worsted system arranges all the longer fibres in a parallel formation known as a top and removes the shorter fibres which are known as noils. Noils are a valuable by-product, and may be used in blends for spinning yarns under the woollen system.
Dyeing	The dyeing of the wool may be carried out either immediately following its initial scouring or in the form of top, yarn or woven piece, the stage at which this process takes place being governed by the type of wool and the class of goods being manufactured.
Finishing	After a cloth has been woven it is washed and shrunk in a wet finishing process, then after drying, is cropped and steamed in a dry finishing process. Dependent upon the end use of the fabric, special treatments may be applied to the cloths.

¹ CPL, New Zealand Collection, *A Policy of Continuous Development Keeps Kaiapoi in the Forefront of Industry in N.Z., The Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited* (Christchurch, Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited, 1959), see also, G.W. Lane, *Mosgiel Presents the Woollen Industry* (Mosgiel, Mosgiel Woollen Factory Company Limited, 1968), M.J. Newsome, 'Factors in the Development and Location of the Woollen Textile Industry in New Zealand,' MA Thesis, (Christchurch, University of Canterbury, 1967), *Occupational Information for Intending Emigrants* (Wellington, Labour Department 195?), *The Saga of a Woollen Mill* (Dunedin, Ross and Glendinning Limited, 1952), and the Report of Committee of Inquiry to the Minister of Industries and Commerce, *New Zealand Woollen and Associated Textile Milling Industry* (Wellington, 1969).

Scribbling	The first stage of the carding process or the process of unravelling the wool before carding it (see Carding).
Scouring	A process (the wool is gently paddled through different cleansing solutions) that removes the wool's natural grease together with dirt and 'yolk'.
Shoddy	Reprocessed wool which is usually obtained from 'woollen' and knitted cloth. The lowest grade is 'mungo' from 'worsted' cloth which requires a lot of tearing to separate the fibres, thus shortening them.
Sorting	The fleece of a sheep is made up of several qualities of wool which, in order to obtain an even fabric, have to be sorted out into their respective categories
Twisting	This process doubles two or more threads together for strength or colour effect, according to design.
Warping	Warp threads run lengthwise in the cloth. Before weaving, these have to be fastened to a warp bar at one end and then wound around a warp beam. This was a slow process, and, since it had often to be done in the fancy tweed trade where short runs prevailed, it raised costs.
Weft	The crosswise threads in a piece of cloth.
Winding	Yarn for warp threads was wound on to bobbins ready for use, and weft yarn was wound on to prins.
Woollen Spinning	As the wool leaves the carding machines, it takes the form of a fine film of fibres which, when rubbed together, form a thread. This soft thread is passed to the spinning department where it is drawn out on the woollen spinning machines or mules to a finer thread of pre-determined thickness. At the same time, it receives sufficient twist to strengthen it, making it into a workable thread.
Worsted	Fabrics made from longer wool that has been combed, i.e. the fibres have been straightened and laid parallel to each other.

APPENDICE I

Products Manufactured by Each Textile Mill in New Zealand¹ (as of 1969)

Company	Tops	Worsted System		Yarn		Piece Goods	
		Weaving	Hand Knit	Double Knit Jersey	Other Machine Knitting		
Alliance	*	*	*	*	*		*
F. & T.	*			*	*		
Holeproof	*	*	*	*	*		*
Kaiapoi	*	*	*	*	*		*
Lane Walker Rudkin	*	*		*	*		*
Millers		*					*
Mosgiel	*	*	*	*	*		*
Onehunga							
U.E.B.			*		*		
Universal							*
Wanganui							
Woollen Industries							
Totals	6	6	5	6	7		7

Company		Woollen System		Piece Goods		B & R*
		Weaving	Yarn Hand Knit Machine Knitting	Carpet		
Alliance		*	* *	* *		*
F. & T.				*		
Holeproof		*	* *		*	*
Kaiapoi	*		*	*	*	
Lane Walker Rudkin	*		*		*	*
Millers						
Mosgiel	*		* *	* *		*
Onehunga	*				*	*
U.E.B.				*		
Universal						
Wanganui	*				*	*
Woollen Industries			*			
Totals		7	3 6	4	7	7

¹ Report of Committee of Inquiry to the Minister of Industries and Commerce, *New Zealand Woollen and Associated Textile Milling Industry*, (Wellington, 1969), p. 98. To clarify, U.E.B. Industries Limited was a newly established company during the 1960s that had taken over Ross and Glendining Ltd and Napier Woollen Mills Ltd. F.&T. Australia Limited appeared to have a subsidiary textile milling unit here in New Zealand.

*B. & R. - Blankets and Rugs.

APPENDICE II

Chairmen and Directors of the KWMCo 1878 – 1942

Chairmen

Isaac Wilson	1878 - 1883
George Henry Blackwell	1884 - 1914
J A Frostick	1915 - 1923
J H Blackwell	1924 - 1927
A. McKellar	1927 - 1939
T.W. Lewis	1940 - 1942

Directors

Isaac Wilson	1878 - 1883
George Henry Blackwell	1878 - 1914
R. Allan	1878 - 1889
William Sansom	1878 - 1921
Edwin Parnham	1878 - 1911 (d)
J.T. Peacock	1884 - 1905 (d)
W.R. Mitchell	1887 - 1905
W.Strange	1886 - 1893
C.W. Turner	1889 - 1893
J.P. Connal	1893 - 1904
W.Harris	1893 - 1904 (d)
Samual Manning	1904 - 1922
R.A. McDougall	1905 - 1925
James A. Frostick	1905 - 1925
W.H. Clark	1906 - 1926 and 1929 - 1943
W.James Jamieson	1911 - 1924
J.H. Blackwell	1915 - 1929
W.C. Bean	1921 - 1925
Arnaud McKellar	1921 - 1939 (d)
J.Tait	1925 - 1927
Andrew F. Carey	1925 - 1937 (d)
T.M. Warren	1926 - 1927
T.W.Lewis	1927 - 1942 (d)
G.W. Armitage	1927 - 1943 (d)
J.H. Rhodes	1937 - 1960 (d)
Denys Hoare	1939 - 1959 (d)

APPENDICE III

University of Canterbury
Department of History

A. INFORMATION

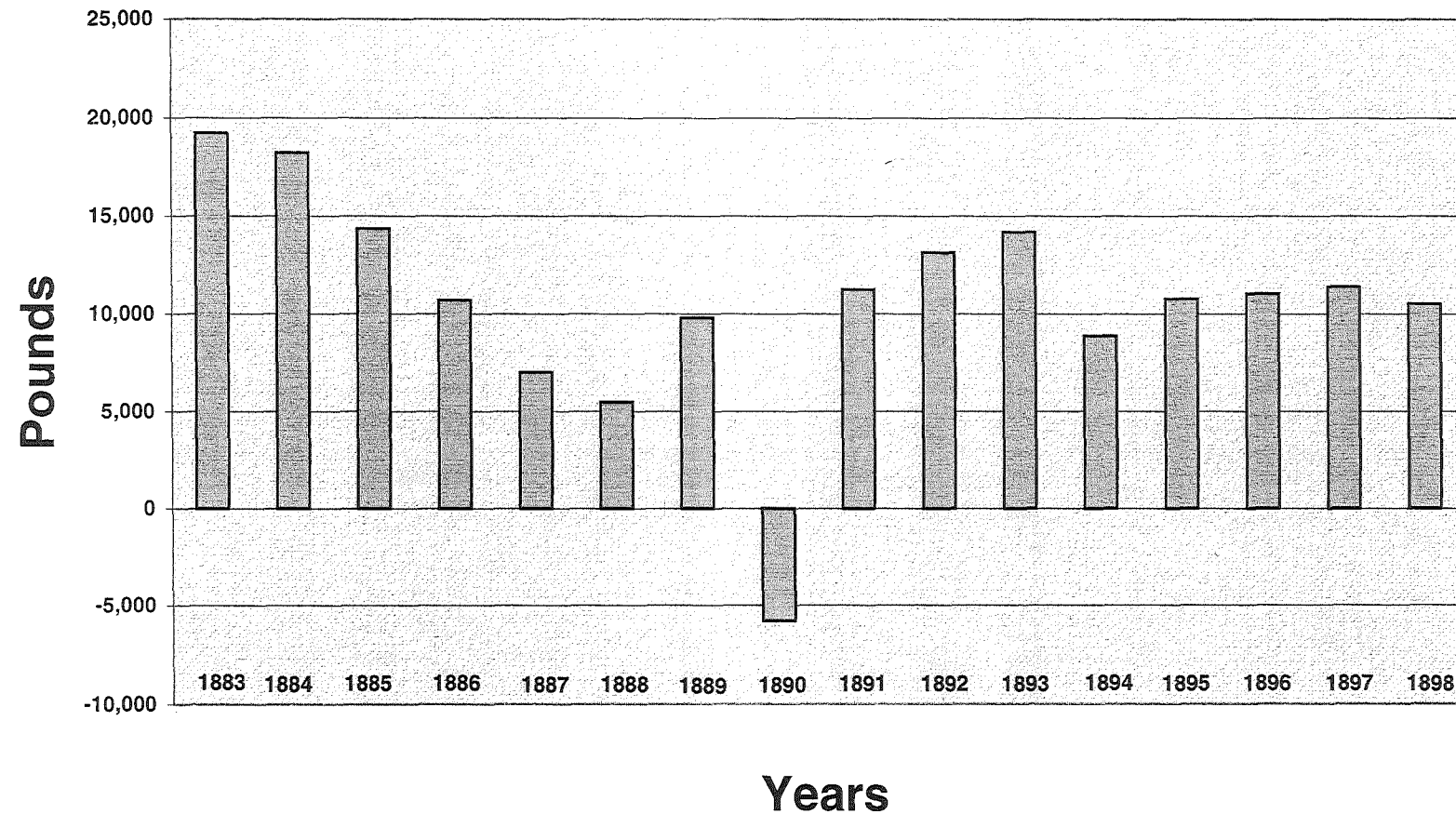
1. You are invited to participate as a voluntary subject in an oral history project.
2. The name of this project is History 690 MA Thesis
3. The aim of this project is to construct, as far as possible, a basic business and social history of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company spanning the period 1878 – 1978.
4. Your involvement in this project will be confined to either a questionnaire or to an interview (structured/unstructured) recorded on audiotape.
5. As a follow-up, you may be asked to check the transcript or notes taken during the interview. You have the right to withdraw from the project at any time and to withdraw any information you have provided.
6. The interviewer has been advised to avoid questions which may cause cultural offence or emotional distress.
7. The project is not intended for publication, but a copy may be deposited in the University Library for future reference. You may request anonymity. If the results of the interview(s) are to be included in a future publication, your written consent will be sought.
8. The student conducting this research is Tania Maree Secker.
9. The supervisor of this project is Dr G.W. Rice who may be contacted at 355-7402 or 364-2283 and will be pleased to discuss any concerns you may have about participation in the project.
10. This project has been reviewed by the University of Canterbury Human Ethics Committee.

B. CONSENT FORM

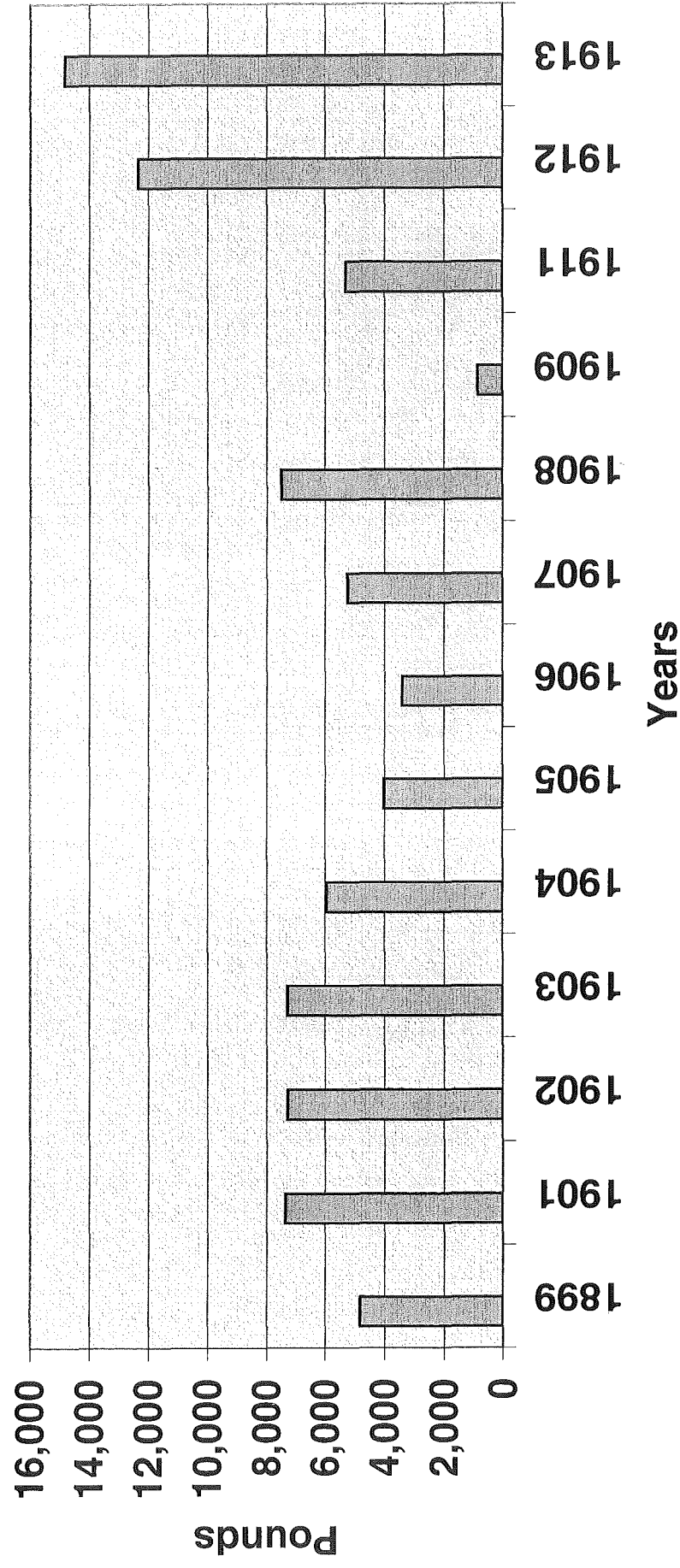
Name of Project: A Business and Social History of the Kaiapoi Woollen Manufacturing Company Limited 1878 - 1942.

I have read and understood the description of the above-named project. On this basis I agree to participate as a voluntary subject in the project, and I consent to the deposit of any information I provide in the University of Canterbury's Macmillan Brown Library. I understand also that I may at any time withdraw from the project, including withdrawal of any information I have provided.

Signed: _____ Date _____



Appendice IV: Profits and Losses - Before Providing Dividend 1883 - 1898



**Appendix V - Profits and Losses - After Providing
Dividend - 1899 - 1913**

APPENDICE VI

Profits and Losses 1914 – 1942

Year £

1914	
1915	22,790 Net Profit
1916	
1917	
1918	51,875 Gross Profit (Before Providing for Dividend and Income Tax)
1919	56,660 Gross Profit
1920	
1921	60,473 Gross Profit
1922*	
1923	21,124 Gross Profit
1924**	5,281
1925***	90,784
1926	4,274 Net Profit (After providing for Dividend and Income Tax)
1927	
1928	12,664 Net Profit
1929	14,943 Net Profit
1930	14,942 Net Profit
1931	-30,272
1932	-3,195
1933	6,782 Net Profit
1934	17,855 Net Profit
1935	65,849 Gross Profit
1936	85,929 Gross Profit
1937	92,177 Gross Profit
1938	
1939	85,076 Gross Profit
1940	116,470 Gross Profit
1941	25,241 Gross Profit
1942	

* 1922 Did not state exact profit or loss for this particular year.

** 1924 Taken from the General Reserve in order to pay Dividend for this year.

*** 1925 Taken from the General Reserve in order to pay Dividend for this year.

The figures for those years not displaying either a profit or a loss were not found.

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PF/E 106 Original Chimney Kaiapoi Woollen Mill c1900

PF/E 125 Aerial View of the Kaiapoi Woollen Mill c1950

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